

Does Social Media Influencer Credibility Drive Purchase Intention? The Mediating Role of Attitude Toward Brand in Social Media Marketing

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menguji hubungan antara kredibilitas influencer media sosial dan niat beli, serta menganalisis peran mediasi sikap terhadap merek dalam hubungan tersebut. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif dengan metode survei. Data dikumpulkan dari 200 responden yang mengetahui parfum Mykonos melalui influencer media sosial. Data dianalisis menggunakan Partial Least Squares-Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) dengan bantuan perangkat lunak SmartPLS untuk mengevaluasi model pengukuran dan model struktural. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kredibilitas influencer media sosial tidak memiliki pengaruh langsung yang signifikan terhadap niat beli. Namun, kredibilitas influencer media sosial berpengaruh positif dan signifikan terhadap sikap terhadap merek, yang selanjutnya berpengaruh signifikan terhadap niat beli. Selain itu, temuan penelitian mengonfirmasi bahwa sikap terhadap merek memediasi secara penuh hubungan antara kredibilitas influencer media sosial dan niat beli. Penelitian ini memberikan kontribusi pada literatur influencer marketing dengan mengintegrasikan Source Credibility Theory dan Theory of Reasoned Action dalam satu kerangka penelitian, serta menegaskan peran penting sikap terhadap merek sebagai mediator penuh dalam menjelaskan pengaruh kredibilitas influencer terhadap niat beli.

Kata Kunci: *Social media influencer credibility; Brand attitude; Purchase intention; Digital marketing; Local Perfume.*

Abstract

This study aims to examine the relationship between social media influencer credibility and purchase intention, as well as to investigate the mediating role of attitude toward brand in this relationship. This research employs a quantitative approach using a survey method. Data were collected from 200 respondents who are familiar with Mykonos perfume through social media influencers. The data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares-Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with the SmartPLS software to evaluate both measurement and structural models. The results indicate that social media influencer credibility does not have a direct significant effect on purchase intention. However, it has a positive and significant effect on attitude toward brand, which in turn significantly influences purchase intention. Furthermore, the findings confirm that attitude toward brand fully mediates the relationship between social media influencer credibility and purchase intention. This study contributes to the influencer marketing literature by integrating Source Credibility Theory and Theory of Reasoned Action into a single framework and by highlighting the critical role of attitude toward brand as a full mediator in explaining the influence of influencer credibility on purchase intention.

Keywords: *Social media influencer credibility; Brand attitude; Purchase intention; Digital marketing; Local Perfume.*

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INTRODUCTION

The rapid development of digital technology has transformed marketing communication, particularly through the increasing use of social media as a strategic channel for connecting brands and consumers. One prominent strategy in this transformation is influencer marketing, which utilizes individuals with social influence to promote products and shape consumer perceptions. Influencers are considered effective because they deliver promotional messages in a more personal, authentic, and relatable manner compared to traditional advertising (Lou & Yuan, 2019). In addition, influencers often act as opinion leaders who can influence consumer preferences through social media interactions (Jin & Kim, 2022). As social media engagement continues to grow, influencer marketing has become an important strategy for enhancing brand awareness, consumer engagement, and purchase-related responses (Joshi et al., 2025; Vrontis et al., 2021).

In consumer behavior research, the effectiveness of influencer marketing is closely related to influencer credibility. Based on Source Credibility Theory, credible sources are more likely to persuade audiences because they are perceived as knowledgeable and trustworthy (Ohanian, 1990). In the context of influencer marketing, credibility is commonly reflected through expertise and trustworthiness, which determine the extent to which consumers accept and rely on information delivered by influencers. Previous studies have shown that influencer credibility can positively affect consumer trust, brand evaluation, and purchase intention (Li & Peng, 2021; Saima & Khan, 2020). Trivedi and Sama (2020) also argue that influencers can build emotional connections with consumers, which may shape brand attitudes and purchasing behavior.

However, previous findings on the relationship between influencer credibility and purchase intention remain inconsistent. Some studies indicate that influencer credibility has a significant effect on purchase intention (Li & Peng, 2021; Saima & Khan, 2020), while other studies show that social influence or social media marketing does not always directly increase purchase intention (Amelia et al., 2024; Teo et al., 2019). These mixed findings suggest that the influence of influencers on purchase intention may not occur directly, but through internal psychological mechanisms. Prior research has examined several mediating variables, such as trust, engagement, brand admiration, and parasocial relationships (Masuda et al., 2022; Trivedi & Sama, 2020). Nevertheless, the role of attitude toward brand as a mediating variable between influencer credibility and purchase intention remains relatively underexplored, particularly in the context of local brands.

Theoretically, this study integrates Source Credibility Theory and the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) to explain the relationship between influencer credibility, attitude toward brand, and purchase intention. Source Credibility Theory explains how the credibility of influencers as message sources can shape consumer perceptions

of a brand. Meanwhile, TRA explains that behavioral intention is influenced by an individual's attitude toward the behavior and subjective norms (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1977). In marketing contexts, attitude toward brand reflects consumers' overall evaluation of a brand and is considered an important predictor of purchase intention (Spears & Singh, 2004). Therefore, attitude toward brand can serve as a psychological mechanism that explains how influencer credibility is translated into purchase intention.

This issue is relevant in the context of the local perfume industry, particularly the Mykonos brand. Based on the authors' observation of social media and e-commerce platforms in April 2026, Mykonos demonstrates strong digital presence, as reflected in its large number of followers on TikTok and Shopee as well as its market expansion to several Southeast Asian countries. This indicates that Mykonos actively utilizes digital marketing and influencer-based promotion to increase brand visibility. However, high exposure and popularity do not necessarily lead directly to consumer purchase intention. Consumers may still need to develop a favorable attitude toward the brand before forming an intention to purchase. Therefore, examining attitude toward brand as a mediator is important to better understand how influencer credibility affects consumer purchase intention in this context.

Based on the background and research gap, this study aims to examine the effect of social media influencer credibility on purchase intention and to analyze the mediating role of attitude toward brand in this relationship. This study contributes to the influencer marketing literature by explaining the indirect mechanism through which influencer credibility influences purchase intention. Practically, the findings are expected to provide insights for local brands in designing influencer marketing strategies that not only increase exposure but also strengthen positive consumer attitudes toward the brand.

Source Credibility Theory

Source Credibility Theory is a fundamental framework in persuasive communication, explaining that message effectiveness is largely determined by the characteristics of the source delivering the message. Individuals are more likely to accept and trust information from sources perceived as credible. Ohanian (1990) conceptualizes source credibility through three dimensions: expertise, trustworthiness, and attractiveness although in digital marketing contexts, expertise and trustworthiness are considered the most dominant. In influencer marketing, influencers function as communication sources capable of shaping consumers' perceptions and evaluations of a brand. Lou & Yuan (2019) emphasize that influencer credibility plays a crucial role in building consumer trust, as audiences tend to rely more on recommendations from influencers perceived as knowledgeable and trustworthy. This is supported by Saima and Khan (2020), who find that influencer credibility significantly influences consumer trust and purchase intention.

Furthermore, Li and Peng (2021) show that influencer characteristics, including credibility, significantly affect consumers' brand perceptions, while Vrontis et al. (2021) highlight credibility as a key determinant of influencer marketing effectiveness. Therefore, Source Credibility Theory provides a strong conceptual foundation for understanding how influencers, as information sources, influence consumer attitudes

and behaviors. In this study, the theory is used to explain the role of social media influencer credibility as an independent variable affecting brand attitude and purchase intention.

Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA)

The Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) explains that behavioral intention is influenced by an individual's attitude toward the behavior and subjective norms (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1977). In marketing contexts, this concept can be adapted into attitude toward brand, which reflects consumers' overall evaluation of a brand. Spears and Singh (2004) state that brand attitude is formed through consumers' experiences, information, and perceptions, and plays an important role in shaping purchase intention.

Prior studies confirm that attitude toward brand significantly affects purchase intention and can serve as a mediator between marketing stimuli and consumer responses (Abzari et al., 2014; Sallam & Algammash, 2016). In influencer marketing, Trivedi and Sama (2020) also show that influencers can foster positive brand attitudes that subsequently increase purchase intention. Therefore, TRA supports the role of attitude toward brand as a key psychological mechanism in explaining the relationship between influencer credibility and purchase intention.

Social Media Influencer Credibility and Purchase Intention

Social media influencer credibility refers to consumers' perceptions of an influencer's level of expertise and trustworthiness in delivering information about a product or brand. Based on Source Credibility Theory, source credibility is a key factor determining the effectiveness of persuasive communication (Ohanian, 1990). In the context of social media, influencers perceived as having high expertise and trustworthiness are more likely to build audience trust and enhance message acceptance, thereby shaping consumer evaluations of promoted content (Lou & Yuan, 2019). Meanwhile, purchase intention is defined as the likelihood or willingness of consumers to buy a product or brand after undergoing an evaluation process (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1977). Spears and Singh (2004) emphasize that purchase intention is a crucial predictor of actual consumer behavior. In digital marketing, purchase intention is influenced by various factors, including perceptions of the information source, trust in the message, and prior brand experience, making it a commonly used indicator of marketing effectiveness, including influencer marketing.

The relationship between social media influencer credibility and purchase intention has been widely examined, yet findings remain mixed. Saima and Khan (2020) find that influencer credibility has a positive and significant effect on purchase intention, particularly through the dimension of trustworthiness, while Masuda et al. (2022) also report that influencer attributes positively influence purchase intention in social media contexts. However, Lou and Yuan (2019) reveal that not all dimensions of influencer credibility have a direct effect on purchase intention, as some effects operate indirectly through variables such as trust and perceived value. Despite these inconsistencies, most studies suggest a generally positive relationship between influencer credibility and purchase intention, indicating that higher credibility increases the likelihood of consumers intending to purchase promoted products. Therefore, this study proposes the following hypothesis:

H1: Social media influencer credibility has a positive effect on purchase intention.

Social Media Influencer Credibility and Attitude Toward Brand

Attitude toward brand is defined as consumers' overall evaluation of a brand, reflecting their level of liking or disliking toward it (Spears & Singh, 2004). This attitude is formed through both cognitive and affective processes, including consumers' experiences, information, and exposure to marketing communications. In the context of digital marketing, attitude toward brand serves as a key indicator in understanding how consumers respond to marketing stimuli before forming behavioral intentions. According to the Theory of Reasoned Action, attitude is a primary determinant of intention, making brand attitude a crucial stage in the consumer decision-making process (Ajzen, 1991).

In influencer marketing, influencer credibility acts as a stimulus that can shape consumers' attitudes toward a brand. Trivedi and Sama (2020) find that influencer attributes such as expertise and credibility significantly influence the formation of brand attitude, which subsequently affects purchase intention. Similarly, Jin et al. (2019) show that influencers on social media platforms, particularly Instagram, can generate more positive brand attitudes compared to traditional celebrities due to higher levels of trustworthiness and social presence. These findings indicate that influencer credibility not only influences trust but also shapes consumers' affective evaluations of brands. Furthermore, Dhun and Dangi (2023) demonstrate that dimensions of influencer credibility, such as expertise and similarity, positively affect brand attitude, while influencer-brand congruence also enhances positive consumer attitudes. Although some variables, such as attractiveness, are not always significant, overall findings suggest that influencer credibility is a key factor in shaping brand attitude. Based on prior research, the relationship between social media influencer credibility and attitude toward brand is generally positive and significant, indicating that higher credibility leads to more favorable brand attitudes. Therefore, this study proposes the following hypothesis:

H2: Social media influencer credibility has a positive effect on attitude toward brand.

Attitude Toward Brand and Purchase Intention

The relationship between attitude toward brand and purchase intention is an important issue in consumer behavior research. Based on the Theory of Reasoned Action, an individual's attitude can influence behavioral intention, including the intention to purchase. In marketing contexts, attitude toward brand reflects consumers' overall evaluation of a brand, which may determine whether they are willing to buy the product. Spears and Singh (2004) explain that attitude toward brand and purchase intention are distinct constructs, but both are strongly related, as a favorable brand attitude can encourage stronger purchase intention.

Previous studies also support this relationship. Sallam and Algammash (2016) found that brand attitude significantly influences purchase intention and mediates the

relationship between attitude toward advertising and purchase intention. Similarly, Abzari et al. (2014) showed that marketing activities can shape brand attitudes, which subsequently drive consumers' purchase intentions. These findings indicate that attitude toward brand plays an important role in linking marketing stimuli and consumer behavioral responses. Therefore, consumers who have a more favorable attitude toward a brand are more likely to develop a stronger intention to purchase. Based on this explanation, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H3: Attitude toward brand has a positive effect on purchase intention.

Mediation Attitude Toward Brand

In marketing contexts, the relationship between marketing stimuli and consumer behavior often operates through internal psychological processes, such as attitude. Based on the Theory of Reasoned Action, attitude plays an important role in shaping behavioral intention. In this study, attitude toward brand is positioned as a mediating variable that explains how influencer credibility affects purchase intention (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1977). Previous studies indicate that influencer marketing can influence purchase intention through psychological mechanisms. Trivedi and Sama (2020) found that influencer marketing affects purchase intention through brand admiration and brand attitude, while Jin et al. (2019) showed that influencer presence can enhance brand attitude and consumer responses. Similarly, Dhun and Dangi (2023) demonstrated that influencer credibility dimensions, such as expertise and trustworthiness, positively influence brand attitude. Since attitude toward brand has also been shown to significantly affect purchase intention (Abzari et al., 2014; Sallam & Algammash, 2016), it can be argued that brand attitude mediates the relationship between influencer credibility and purchase intention. Therefore, this study proposes the following hypothesis :

H4: Attitude toward brand positively mediates the effect of social media influencer credibility on purchase intention.

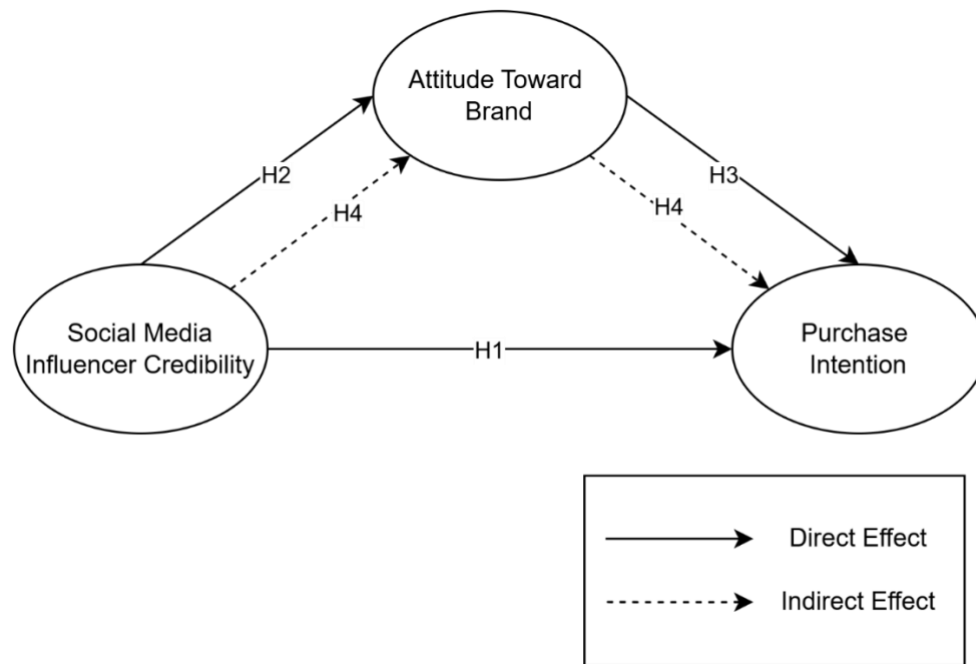


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

Figure 1 illustrates the conceptual framework of this study. The study examines the mediating role of attitude toward brand in the relationship between social media influencer credibility and purchase intention.

RESEARCH METHODS

Design and Data Collection

This study adopts a quantitative approach using a survey method to examine the proposed relationships. Data were collected through an online questionnaire using Google Forms, which was distributed via social media platforms such as Instagram, WhatsApp, and email. The population of this study consists of individuals who are familiar with the Mykonos perfume brand through social media influencers. Therefore, respondents were selected based on the main criterion that they had prior knowledge of Mykonos obtained through influencer-related content.

The data collection process was conducted in Indonesia between January and April 2026. Before completing the questionnaire, respondents were informed about the purpose of the study, the confidentiality of their responses, and their voluntary participation. A screening question was used to ensure respondent eligibility: "Are you familiar with the Mykonos perfume brand through social media influencers?" Of the 211 responses collected, 200 met the criteria and were included in the final analysis, while 11 responses were excluded.

This study employed non-probability sampling with a purposive sampling technique. Purposive sampling is appropriate when respondents are selected based on specific criteria relevant to the research objectives (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). Purposive sampling is appropriate when respondents are selected based on specific criteria relevant to the research objectives. This technique was chosen due to its practicality in reaching respondents with the desired characteristics and its efficiency in terms of time and cost compared to probability sampling methods (Bagozzi & Yi,

2012). This technique was chosen because it enables the researcher to reach respondents with relevant experiences and perceptions in the context of influencer marketing.

Respondent Profile

Based on the data collection results, a total of 211 respondents were initially obtained. After applying the screening criteria, specifically respondents who are familiar with the Mykonos perfume brand through social media influencers, 200 respondents were deemed eligible and included in the analysis. In terms of demographic characteristics, the sample shows a relatively balanced gender distribution, with 49.3% male and 50.7% female respondents. The majority of respondents fall within the age range of 21–25 years (71.1%), representing a group of active social media users with high exposure to influencer content. Additionally, most respondents reported being familiar with the Mykonos brand (95.3%) and having learned about the product through influencers (94.8%), indicating that influencers play a significant role in building brand awareness. Overall, these respondent characteristics are considered appropriate and relevant to the objectives of this study, which examines the effect of social media influencer credibility on purchase intention with the mediating role of attitude toward brand.

Measurement Item

The measurement of variables in this study is based on established instruments from prior research. The social media influencer credibility variable (X) is measured using a scale adapted from Saima and Khan (2020), which is grounded in Ohanian (1990) source credibility framework, focusing on two main dimensions, namely expertise and trustworthiness, reflecting the influencer's level of knowledge and credibility in delivering information to consumers. The attitude toward brand variable (Z) is measured using the instrument developed by Spears and Singh (2004), representing consumers' overall evaluative judgment of a brand. Meanwhile, the purchase intention variable (Y) is also measured using the scale from Spears and Singh (2004), capturing consumers' behavioral tendency to purchase. All measurement items are assessed using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree, to measure respondents' level of agreement with each statement.

Common Method Bias

Questionnaires are commonly used to collect responses in quantitative research; however, the use of a single instrument and data source may lead to common method bias (CMB), which arises from the measurement method employed (Bag et al., 2021). Therefore, it is important to ensure that the collected data are free from such bias. In this study, common method bias is assessed using the full collinearity test by examining the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values for each construct, as recommended by Kock (2015), where a model is considered free from common method bias if all VIF values are below the threshold of 5. The results show that the VIF value for the relationship between attitude toward brand and purchase intention is 4.708, the VIF value for the relationship between social media influencer credibility and purchase intention is 4.708, and the VIF value for the relationship between social media influencer credibility and attitude toward brand is 1.000. Since all values are

below the recommended threshold, it can be concluded that the data are free from common method bias and suitable for further analysis.

Data Analysis

Data analysis in this study is conducted using Partial Least Squares–Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with the assistance of SmartPLS 3.0 software to estimate the model parameters. This approach is selected due to its advantages in analyzing predictive and complex models, as well as its effectiveness in testing mediating relationships among variables. In addition, PLS-SEM has higher statistical power compared to Covariance-Based SEM (CB-SEM), making it more capable of identifying significant relationships within the population (Hair et al., 2019). The use of this method is also consistent with recent studies in marketing and consumer behavior that employ similar approaches (Hair et al., 2019; Raza et al., 2020). The analysis is conducted in two main stages, namely the evaluation of the measurement model to assess construct validity and reliability, and the evaluation of the structural model to examine the relationships among variables and test the proposed hypotheses (Lata et al., 2021).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Measurement Model Assessment

In the first step, the measurement model was analyzed using SmartPLS 3.0 to ensure that each construct in this study was accurately measured by its indicators. Therefore, convergent validity and construct reliability were assessed to evaluate the measurement model. To examine convergent validity, the outer loading values of each indicator were initially evaluated. According to Hair et al. (2020), acceptable loading values should exceed 0.70. The results indicate that all indicators have outer loading values above 0.70, ranging from 0.872 to 0.946 for purchase intention, 0.884 to 0.920 for attitude toward brand, and 0.890 to 0.917 for social media influencer credibility, confirming that all indicators are valid. Construct reliability was then assessed using Composite Reliability (CR), where Hair et al. (2020) recommend a minimum threshold of 0.70. In this study, CR values for all constructs range from 0.959 to 0.967, indicating a high level of internal consistency. Additionally, Cronbach's Alpha (CA) was used to further support reliability testing, with values ranging from 0.946 to 0.960, which also exceed the recommended threshold. Finally, Average Variance Extracted (AVE) was used to assess convergent validity, with Hair et al. (2020) suggesting a minimum value of 0.50. The results show that AVE values for all constructs range from 0.806 to 0.848, indicating that more than 50% of the variance in the indicators is explained by the corresponding constructs. Therefore, it can be concluded that the measurement model meets the criteria for convergent validity and demonstrates strong reliability. Table 1 presents the convergent validity results for all constructs confirmed in this study.

Table 1. Outer Loadings

Construct	Loadings	CR	CA	AVE
Social Media Influencer Credibility		0.959	0.946	0.824
The influencer who reviews Mykonos perfume is truly knowledgeable in the field of fragrances.	0.890			

The influencer who reviews Mykonos has experience reviewing other perfume products.	0.897			
The influencer discussing Mykonos has a strong understanding of perfumes.	0.899			
The influencer is competent in evaluating perfume products.	0.890			
The influencer is honest in expressing opinions about Mykonos perfume.	0.917			
The influencer is reliable in providing perfume recommendations.	0.890			
I trust the influencer's recommendations regarding Mykonos.	0.902			
Attitude Towards Brand	0.965	0.955	0.848	
I perceive Mykonos as an attractive brand.	0.920			
Overall, I consider Mykonos to be a good brand.	0.907			
I have a favorable impression of the Mykonos brand.	0.907			
I have a positive evaluation of Mykonos.	0.884			
I like the Mykonos brand.	0.920			
Purchase Intention	0.967	0.960	0.806	
I strongly intend to purchase Mykonos.	0.936			
I will purchase Mykonos.	0.925			
I have a very high intention to buy Mykonos.	0.923			
I am very likely to purchase Mykonos.	0.872			
I will most likely purchase Mykonos.	0.946			
Note(s) : CR, composite reliability; CA, Cronbach's alpha; AVE, average variance extracted				
Source(s): Table based on primary data collected by the authors				

After establishing convergent validity, the next step is to evaluate the discriminant validity of the measurement model (see Table 2). Discriminant validity is assessed by comparing the square root of the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) with the correlations among constructs using the Fornell and Larcker (1981) criterion. The results indicate that the square root of AVE for each construct is higher than its correlations with other constructs, suggesting that discriminant validity is supported based on the Fornell-Larcker criterion. To further assess discriminant validity, the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) was also examined. The HTMT results show that some values exceed the commonly recommended threshold of 0.90, particularly for closely related constructs. This indicates a high correlation among certain constructs in the model. Nevertheless, this condition can be theoretically understood because attitude toward brand and purchase intention represent closely related stages in the consumer decision-making process. Therefore, although the constructs are conceptually distinct, the discriminant validity results should be interpreted with caution.

Table 2. Discriminant Validity (Fornell and Larcker criterion and HTMT ratio)

Variable	Mean	SD	ATB	PI	SMIC
Fornell and Larcker Criterion					
ATB	3.934	1.140	0.908		
PI	3.891	1.155	0.923	0.921	
SMIC	3.955	1.117	0.887	0.837	0.898
HTMT Ratio					
ATB					
PI			0.971		
SMIC			0.931	0.874	

Note(s): SMIC, Social Media Influencer Credibility; ATB, Attitude Towards Brand; PI, Purchase Intention; SD, standard deviation

Source(s): Table based on primary data collected by the authors

Subsequently, the results were interpreted using the three-box method. Based on the five-point Likert scale criteria, the score range is divided into three categories: low (1.00–2.33), moderate (2.34–3.67), and high (3.68–5.00) (Kistyanto et al., 2022). The analysis shows that the mean score for social media influencer credibility is 3.955, attitude toward brand is 3.934, and purchase intention is 3.891. All three values fall within the high category, indicating that respondents have positive perceptions of influencer credibility, favorable attitudes toward the brand, and strong purchase intentions toward the product studied.

Structural Model Assessment

It is recommended to report path coefficients, p-values, and t-statistics in the structural model to evaluate the significance of the proposed hypotheses (Hair et al., 2019). The structural model was assessed by examining the significance of relationships among variables using the bootstrapping procedure. The results of hypothesis testing reveal both direct and indirect effects among the variables in this study (see Table 3).

Table 3. Hypotheses testing

Hypothesis	β	t	p	Results
Direct Effect				
ATB -> PI	0.847	7.762	0.000	Accepted
SMIC -> ATB	0.887	27.01	0.000	Accepted
SMIC -> PI	0.085	0.751	0.453	Rejected
Indirect Effect				
SMIC -> ATB -> PI	0.752	7.827	0.000	Accepted

Note(s): Relationships are significant at $p < 0.05$ or $t > 1.96$; β = Beta Coefficient, t = t-statistics, p = Probability (p) Value; SMIC, Social Media Influencer Credibility; ATB, Attitude Towards Brand; PI, Purchase Intention

Source(s): Table based on primary data collected by the authors

For the first hypothesis (H1), it was assumed that social media influencer credibility has a positive effect on purchase intention. However, the path analysis results indicate that this relationship is not significant ($\beta = 0.085$, t -statistic = 0.751, $p > 0.05$), leading to the rejection of H1. The second hypothesis (H2) proposes that social media influencer credibility positively affects attitude toward brand. The results show a positive and significant relationship ($\beta = 0.887$, t -statistic = 27.01, $p < 0.05$), thus supporting H2. The third hypothesis (H3) states that attitude toward brand positively influences purchase intention, and the analysis confirms this relationship as positive and significant ($\beta = 0.847$, t -statistic = 7.762, $p < 0.05$), leading to the acceptance of H3.

Regarding the mediation analysis, the fourth hypothesis (H4) proposes that attitude toward brand mediates the relationship between social media influencer credibility and purchase intention. The results indicate that the indirect effect is positive and significant ($\beta = 0.752$, t -statistic = 7.827, $p < 0.05$), supporting H4. Therefore, based on the hypothesis testing results, H1 is rejected, while H2, H3, and H4 are accepted, indicating that attitude toward brand serves as a key mediating variable in linking social media influencer credibility to purchase intention.

Model Fit Indices

In SmartPLS, the standardized root mean square residual (SRMR) and normed fit index (NFI) are commonly used indicators to assess model fit (Henseler et al., 2014; Sarstedt et al., 2022). SRMR is introduced as a goodness-of-fit measure in PLS-SEM to detect model misspecification. An SRMR value below 0.10, or ideally below 0.08, indicates a good model fit (Hu & Bentler, 1998). In this study, the SRMR value of 0.043 indicates an excellent level of model fit. In addition, NFI values range from 0 to 1, with higher values indicating better model fit (Lohmöller, 1989). The results show that the NFI value is 0.811, which falls within an acceptable range. Therefore, based on the SRMR and NFI values, the model in this study can be considered to have a good level of fit and is suitable for further analysis.

The findings of this study show that social media influencer credibility does not directly influence purchase intention, but it has a significant indirect effect through attitude toward brand. This indicates that influencer credibility alone is not sufficient to encourage consumers to purchase the promoted product. Instead, consumers need to form a favorable attitude toward the brand before developing purchase intention.

The result of H1 shows that social media influencer credibility has no significant effect on purchase intention. This finding suggests that even when influencers are perceived as knowledgeable and trustworthy, their credibility does not automatically lead consumers to make a purchase. This result is consistent with Lou and Yuan (2019), who found that not all dimensions of influencer credibility directly affect purchase intention, but it differs from Saima and Khan (2020) and Masuda et al. (2022), who reported a positive effect of influencer credibility on purchase intention.

One possible explanation is that perfume is an experiential product, where consumers may not rely solely on influencer recommendations. Instead, they may consider other factors, such as brand image, personal preference, perceived quality, and product suitability before forming purchase intention. Therefore, H1 is rejected.

The result of H2 indicates that social media influencer credibility has a positive and significant effect on attitude toward brand. This finding confirms that credible influencers can shape consumers' perceptions and evaluations of a brand. Influencers who are perceived as having expertise and trustworthiness are more likely to create positive brand attitudes among consumers. This result supports previous studies by Dhun and Dangi (2023), Saima and Khan (2020), and Trivedi and Sama (2020), which show that influencer credibility contributes to the formation of favorable brand attitudes. Therefore, H2 is accepted.

The result of H3 shows that attitude toward brand has a positive and significant effect on purchase intention. This means that consumers with favorable attitudes toward a brand are more likely to develop stronger intentions to purchase the product. This finding is in line with the Theory of Reasoned Action, which explains that attitude plays an important role in shaping behavioral intention. It also supports previous studies by Abzari et al. (2014), Sallam and Algammash (2016), and Spears and Singh (2004), which demonstrate that brand attitude is an important predictor of purchase intention. Therefore, H3 is accepted.

Furthermore, the result of H4 confirms that attitude toward brand significantly mediates the relationship between social media influencer credibility and purchase intention. This finding indicates that the influence of influencer credibility on purchase intention occurs indirectly through the formation of positive brand attitudes. In other words, credible influencers first shape consumers' favorable evaluations of the brand, which subsequently increase their purchase intention. This result supports Trivedi and Sama (2020), who found that psychological variables such as brand admiration and brand attitude mediate the effect of influencer marketing on consumer behavior.

Overall, this study demonstrates that attitude toward brand acts as a full mediator in the relationship between social media influencer credibility and purchase intention. The non-significant direct effect and significant indirect effect indicate that consumers are not directly influenced by influencer credibility in forming purchase intention. Instead, influencer credibility affects purchase intention by first shaping positive attitudes toward the brand. Thus, the effectiveness of influencer marketing depends not only on the credibility of influencers but also on their ability to build favorable consumer evaluations of the promoted brand.

Theoretical Implication

This study makes a significant contribution to the development of the literature in the fields of influencer marketing and consumer behavior. Specifically, it enhances the understanding of the relationship between social media influencer credibility and purchase intention by integrating Source Credibility Theory and the Theory of Reasoned Action into a comprehensive model (Ajzen, 1991; Ohanian, 1990). The findings reveal that the effect of influencer credibility on purchase intention does not occur directly but operates through attitude toward brand as a full mediator. This

highlights the central role of psychological variables, particularly brand attitude, in explaining how marketing stimuli are translated into behavioral intentions (Spears & Singh, 2004).

Furthermore, this study contributes to resolving inconsistencies in prior research that have reported mixed findings regarding the direct effect of influencers on purchase intention (Lou & Yuan, 2019; Masuda et al., 2022; Saima & Khan, 2020). By demonstrating the presence of full mediation, this study clarifies that the relationship is indirect and requires intervening variables to explain the underlying mechanism. These findings are also consistent with recent studies emphasizing the importance of psychological mechanisms, such as trust and attitude, in mediating the influence of influencers on consumer behavior (Ahmad et al., 2026; Khurana et al., 2025). Therefore, this study extends the conceptual model in influencer marketing by positioning attitude toward brand as a key variable.

Practical Implication

From a practical perspective, the findings of this study provide important implications for practitioners, particularly in designing influencer-based marketing strategies. The results indicate that selecting credible influencers alone is not sufficient to increase consumers' purchase intentions. This is consistent with Lou and Yuan (2019), who argue that the influence of influencers on purchase intention is often mediated by psychological factors such as trust or attitude. Therefore, firms need to ensure that the content delivered by influencers effectively builds positive consumer attitudes toward the brand.

In addition, marketing strategies should not only focus on the popularity or credibility of influencers but also on the alignment between the message conveyed and the brand image, as well as the influencer's ability to shape positive perceptions of the product (Dhun & Dangi, 2023; Trivedi & Sama, 2020). This can be achieved by delivering content that is informative, authentic, and relevant to consumers' needs, as informational value has been shown to be more influential than mere entertainment in shaping trust and consumer behavior (Lou & Yuan, 2019). Consequently, firms can maximize the effectiveness of influencer marketing not only in increasing brand awareness but also in shaping consumer attitudes that ultimately drive purchase intention.

Limitation and Future Direction

Based on the identified limitations, future research is recommended to extend the research model by incorporating additional relevant variables, such as trust, brand engagement, or parasocial relationships, to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the mechanisms through which influencers affect consumer behavior. In addition, future studies may employ mixed-method approaches to gain deeper insights into psychological aspects that cannot be fully captured through quantitative methods alone. Future research is also encouraged to test this model across different industries and product categories to enhance the generalizability of the findings. Moreover, comparisons between different types of influencers, such as micro-influencers and macro-influencers, may offer valuable directions for further investigation. Accordingly, future studies are expected to provide broader and more

in-depth insights into the effectiveness of influencer marketing across various contexts.

CONCLUSION

This study analyzes the effect of social media influencer credibility on purchase intention by considering the mediating role of attitude toward brand. Based on the PLS-SEM results, social media influencer credibility does not have a significant direct effect on purchase intention, indicating that influencer credibility does not automatically encourage consumers to make a purchase. However, influencer credibility has a positive and significant effect on attitude toward brand, and attitude toward brand also significantly influences purchase intention. Furthermore, attitude toward brand acts as a full mediator in the relationship between social media influencer credibility and purchase intention, suggesting that influencer credibility affects purchase intention indirectly through the formation of positive brand attitudes. Therefore, in the context of digital marketing, the effectiveness of influencer marketing is not solely determined by influencer credibility, but also by its ability to shape favorable consumer perceptions and attitudes toward the brand. Accordingly, influencer-based marketing strategies should not only focus on increasing exposure but also on building strong brand attitudes to drive consumers' purchase intentions.

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