

THE INFLUENCE OF INFLUENCER CREDIBILITY AND CONTENT CHARACTERISTICS ON PURCHASE INTENTION: THE MEDIATING ROLE OF BRAND ATTITUDE AND TRUST

Devi Nurul Aulia

Faculty of Economics and Business, Siliwangi University,
Jl. Siliwangi No.24 Tasikmalaya

04devinurulaulia@gmail.com

Abstract: *This study explores the determinants of purchase intention among Instagram users. This research was designed using a quantitative approach. Data was collected through an online questionnaire administered to active Instagram users. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with AMOS software was employed to analyze the collected data. The sample size in this study is 280 respondents. The respondents are predominantly active Instagram users from West Java, with the remainder from Central Java and East Java. The results of this study emphasize the significant positive impact of influencer credibility on both brand attitude and trust. Another finding of this study is the positive influence of content characteristics on brand attitude and the negative influence of content characteristics on trust. These findings provide practical insights for social media marketers to focus more on choosing credible influencers to maximize user trust. On the other hand, marketers need to design more effective strategies to attract consumer interest and trust by considering the quality and relevance of content to enhance positive brand attitude while maintaining Instagram users' trust.*

Keywords : *Influencer Credibility, Content Characteristics, Brand Attitude, Trust*

Abstrak: Seiring dengan meningkatnya penggunaan media sosial, *influencer marketing* menjadi salah satu strategi yang efektif bagi merek untuk mempengaruhi keputusan konsumen. Studi ini menganalisis bagaimana kredibilitas *influencer*, yang mencakup keahlian, daya tarik, dan kepercayaan, serta kualitas konten yang disampaikan, dapat mempengaruhi niat pembelian konsumen. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengungkap dampak kredibilitas *influencer* dan *content characteristics* terhadap niat pembelian pada pengguna Instagram, dengan mempertimbangkan peran mediasi dari sikap terhadap merek dan kepercayaan. Model *Stimuli-Organism-Response* (SOR) dengan 280 pengguna aktif Instagram berpartisipasi dalam penelitian ini. Data dikumpulkan melalui survei pada pengguna aktif Instagram dan dianalisis menggunakan metode *Structural Equation Modeling* (SEM). Temuan ini memberikan wawasan penting bagi pemasar dalam merancang strategi *influencer marketing* yang efektif, dengan menekankan pentingnya kredibilitas *influencer* dan *content characteristics* untuk membangun *brand attitude* dan kepercayaan konsumen, yang pada akhirnya mendorong *purchase intention*.

Kata Kunci : *Model SOR, Kredibilitas Influencer, Content Characteristics, Brand Attitude, Kepercayaan*

INTRODUCTION

The increasing demand for real-time information has made social media and social networking sites highly relevant sources of information for users. The intensive use of social media and networking platforms has positioned these platforms as vital

information sources for the community. Research (Jiménez-Castillo & Sánchez-Fernández, 2019) shows that companies are increasingly opting for influencer marketing due to its ability to connect brands directly and personally with consumers. An influencer is an individual who has gained substantial influence on social media platforms due to their large number of followers and high level of public trust. Every piece of content they publish has the potential to reach a wide audience (Wardah Fatimah, 2023). As the popularity of influencer marketing rises, data indicates that Instagram has emerged as the leading platform, hosting a diverse array of influencers categorized by their follower count. The global Instagram influencer marketing industry is poised to reach a staggering \$22.2 billion by 2025 (Proctor, 2024). Consumers are increasingly drawn to individuals with substantial followings, perceiving them as more appealing and trustworthy (Djafarova & Rushworth, 2017).

In addition to the credibility of the influencer themselves, recent studies show that visual signals can also trigger positive congruence effects in advertisements, illustrating how visual attributes such as informative appeal can influence user engagement. The content created can significantly affect user engagement (Brüns & Meißner, 2023). Influencer content often influences purchasing decisions and the audience's views of a product. This is crucial given that followers consistently assess influencers based on superficial online interactions (following or not following an influencer, imitating them, recommending them or not). Hence, each contribution is vital, as it collectively fosters a community centered around consistent, captivating, and pertinent discussions on designated subjects (Casaló et al., 2020a).

Given that research on influencer marketing on Instagram is still scarce (Casaló et al., 2020b), there's still a significant knowledge gap concerning Instagram's full impact on influencer effectiveness in driving purchase intention. The current study aims to address this research gap by explaining how Instagram-based influencers can affect users' purchase intentions. Unlike previous research that primarily focused on followers' reactions to promoted products or brands, this study also analyzes followers' reactions concerning purchase intentions. The majority of prior research has exclusively concentrated on influencer credibility. Consequently, this study fills this gap by investigating the impact of content characteristics and brand attitudes cultivated by influencers on Instagram users' purchase intentions. Taking all of this into consideration, and based on the stimulus-organism-response (S-OR) framework proposed by Houland, 1953 in (Abidin Mustika, 2022). This research proposes a model in which influencer promotion and content characteristics are considered stimuli that trigger cognitive and emotional responses in followers that impact trust and brand attitude. This research focuses on the Instagram platform given its popularity in influencer-based marketing campaigns (Belanche et al., 2021a). The results of this research on the impact of influencers and content characteristics on purchase intention are expected to contribute to or benefit the marketing field as well as to enrich academic literature and answer practical needs.

THEORETICAL OVERVIEW

Social Media and Influencers: A Profitable Synergy for Business Growth

Social media has become a ubiquitous tool for global social interaction. Globally, nearly five billion people (59.4% of the world's population) actively use social media and spend more than two and a half hours daily on the platform (Ahmed et al., 2024). Social media in addition to being a means of personal communication has penetrated the business world, these platforms now play a crucial role in various aspects of business, including in the strategic decision-making process. Conversely, influencers have a plethora of social media platforms to execute their marketing campaigns. Instagram, the most popular platform, has surpassed the two billion dollar mark in global revenue from influencer marketing in 2020, and video sharing platforms like TikTok are also gaining significant traction. TikTok's influencer base surged dramatically, experienced a dramatic decline in 2020, falling from 35.5 million to over 106 thousand (Dencheva, 2023). Facebook solidified its position as the world's most widely-used social media platform in 2021. Boasting 2 billion active users, Facebook reigns as the world's largest social network (Jennifer, 2021). Social media is the link between companies and customers through influencers. Therefore, it's crucial to continually refine the strategic approaches used to achieve corporate communication and tactical goals via social media.

Stimulus-Organism-Response Model

The SOR model, introduced by Mehrabian and Russell (1974), elucidates the causal relationship between environmental stimuli, emotional responses, and subsequent behavioral outcomes. The SOR model offers a more comprehensive perspective by integrating the influence of external stimuli and internal responses of the organism (Zhu et al., 2020). SOR theory serve as a basic framework for understanding consumer behavior (Jung Chang et al., 2014), especially regarding online purchase intentions. Referring to previous studies (Alcántara-Pilar et al., 2024; Belanche et al., 2021b; Djafarova & Bowes, 2021), this study adopts the stimulus-organism-response (S-OR) framework as the foundation of this research.

Using the SOR model, this study aims to test the hypothesis that credibility factors (S) such as a person's physical appearance, reliability, and expertise, content characteristics (S) of an Instagram influencer's post significantly contribute to the level of trust and brand attitude (O). In addition to analyzing the factors that influence trust, this study also measures how much trust and brand attitude can encourage Instagram users to intend to buy products offered by influencers (R). By adapting the SOR model to the realm of Instagram influencer marketing, this study contributes to the development of a theoretical framework that elucidates how factors like influencer credibility, and content characteristics influence purchase behavior.

Trust-Commitment Theory

The trust-commitment theory introduced by (Morgan, 1994) highlights the central role of trust and commitment as key pillars in establishing of interpersonal relationships, particularly in business and organizational contexts. This study adopts the traditional trust-commitment framework as a foundation to investigate the dynamics of marketing relationships in an evolving digital context (Wang et al., 2016). This theory states that the existence of trust and commitment is an absolute prerequisite for the formation and development of a relationship, where trust acts as an initial foundation which is then

strengthened by commitment over time (Morgan, 1994). Trust-commitment theory is the most influential theoretical framework in explaining the phenomenon of online purchase intentions (Wistedt, 2024). Trust-commitment theory (Mondal & Chakrabarti, 2021) has become the dominant paradigm in marketing to explain consumer purchase intentions. CTT posits that socio-psychological factors like commitment and trust towards retailers substantially influence purchase intentions (Alcántara-Pilar et al., 2024).

The conceptual framework offered by this theory helps analyze how trust and commitment can build strong long-term relationships between Instagram users and influencers. Referring to previous research by (Alcántara-Pilar et al., 2024; Gubalane & Ha, 2023a) this study leverages trust-commitment theory as a robust framework to comprehend the dynamics of social interaction within the Instagram social media ecosystem.

Influence of Influencer Credibility

Social media influencers are third-party advocates who endorse and mold consumer perceptions of a brand (Freberg et al., 2011). Regarding naive theory, consumer socialization, and market signals, (Nafees et al., 2021a) concluded that influencer credibility can significantly influence consumers' views of a brand. According to (Casaló et al., 2020c; Childers, 2018) influencers possess significant power to influence consumers' purchase decisions, towards the brands they endorse. Along with source credibility, source attractiveness affects trust, this impacts marketing outcomes like the strength of the influencer-consumer relationship, the consumer's view of the brand, and their intention to buy the product (Masuda et al., 2022). Concurrently, a mounting body of evidence indicates that the attributes of social media influencers impact attitudes and brand image, subsequently influencing consumer intentions. Supported by previous research findings that emphasize the importance of visual appeal in shaping consumer perceptions, this study proposes this hypothesis.

H1: Credibility affects brand attitude

Influencers, as arbiters of public opinion, utilize social networks to cultivate credibility, accessibility, and intimacy with their followers, thereby shaping public discourse. Unlike professional advertising practitioners, influencers tend to have no formal training in marketing and even favor using personal experience to build credibility (Cabrera, 2019). The credibility of influencers, as outlined by (Alcántara-Pilar et al., 2024) hinges on three main dimensions: physical attractiveness, reliability, and perceived expertise. A physically attractive influencer can capture initial attention and create a positive first impression (Alcántara-Pilar et al., 2024), resulting in greater audience confidence audience trust. Audiences are more inclined to believe information from influencers perceived as honest, skilled, and transparent (Farhadpoor, 2021; Rogers, 1970). The more expert an influencer is perceived to be, the more accurate and credible the information (Itanghi et al., 2023). Given the intricate relationship between trust and credibility, this study proposes the following hypothesis.

H2: Credibility has an effect on trust

Influence of Content Characteristics

Several studies have focused on the content characteristics of posts by conducting an in-depth analysis used to analyze hashtags and descriptive captions like captions on Instagram (Bashari & Fazl-Ersi, 2020). Research (Francalanci & Hussain, 2017) sought to identify user and content characteristics by analyzing the level of engagement generated by each post. Characteristics of content delivered by micro or Nano influencers notably impact brand attitudes and consumer purchase intentions (Hudders et al., 2021a).

The study (Hudders et al., 2021b) analyzed how content characteristics generated by influencers can influence the effectiveness of an influencer in conveying information that will influence consumer behavior toward brands. Content characteristics, as researched by (Zanon & Teichmann, 2016) are a determinant factor in stimulating consumer response to brands promoted by influencers. Thus, the proposed hypothesis is as follows.

H3: Content characteristics affect brand attitude

The content features of short-form advertisements have been shown to significantly impact consumer purchase intentions, as evidenced by recent studies with creativity and relevance as the main factors (Meng et al., 2024a). A study (de Vries et al., 2012a) found that content characteristics, such as relevance and visual appeal, significantly correlate with users' engagement levels on social media. Authenticity and relevance of content are critical in creating consumer engagement in social media marketing campaigns (Ashley & Tuten, 2015). Research (de Vries et al., 2012b) highlights the importance of content characteristics and post positioning in attracting consumer attention on social media. With the increasing use of social media, brands need to develop engaging content to attract consumers' attention.

In media richness theory, richer or more detailed content is taught more effectively in building understanding and trust. High-richness media such as videos, infographics, or interactive content have more non-verbal and contextual information, which helps audiences interpret information and increases trust (Madeja & Schoder, 2004). Content presented well and based on valid facts tends to increase trust, while content that lacks transparency or comes from untrusted sources can undermine that trust. Therefore, it is necessary to analyze a more in-depth analysis of content characteristics on trust, as the proposed hypothesis.

H4: Content characteristics affect trust

The Effect of Trust on Brand Attitude

In research (Hoveland et al., 1953) define source credibility as the level of our trust in the honesty and validity of the information conveyed. Meanwhile (McGinnies & Ward, 1980) found that this trust has a more powerful influence than source expertise in influencing attitudes towards brands. This aligns with research (Nafees et al., 2021b) employing a source credibility scale initially developed by (McCroskey & Teven, 1999). The relationship between influencer power and brand attitude was mediated by the perception of influencer expertise and trustworthiness. Audiences in this process tend to extend their trust in the influencer to the brands they endorse, thereby adopting a similar positive attitude toward the brand. Based on previous literature this study proposes the following hypothesis.

H5: Trust affects brand attitude

The Relationship Between Brand Attitude and Purchase Intention

According to (Keller, 1993) brand attitude plays an essential role in influencing various aspects of consumer behavior, including purchase intention and loyalty. A positive brand attitude can increase consumer preferences for products and services, culminating in a greater propensity to purchase and enduring brand attachment. Consumers develop this attitude through cognitive and affective evaluations of the brand, which influence how much the brand is valued and chosen among competitors. Consumers exhibiting positive brand attitudes are more predisposed to purchase products from that brand. Research (S. Wu & Lo, 2009) underscores the importance of the relationship between brand attitude and new product purchase intention. Its findings show that a positive attitude towards the brand significantly increases consumer purchase intention.

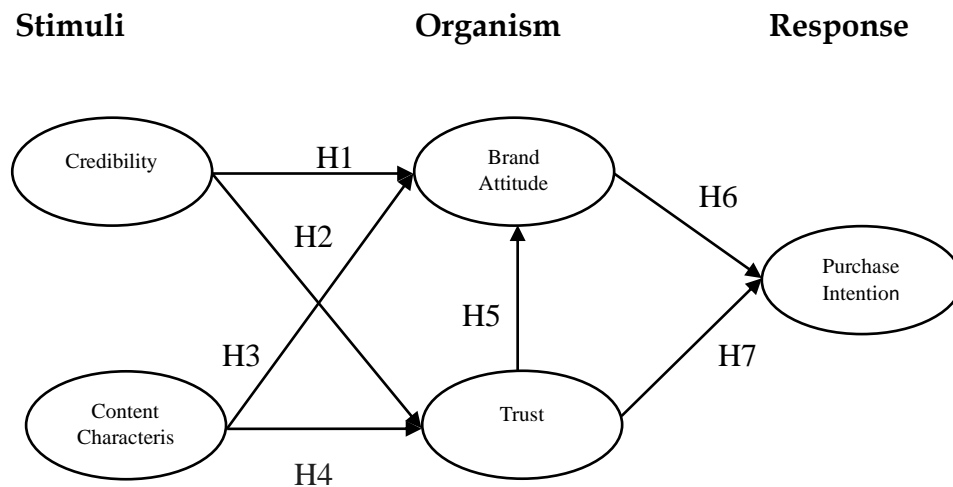
H6: Brand attitude influences purchase intention

Effect of Trust on Purchase Intention

Trust is a cornerstone of relationship marketing, enabling service providers to cultivate lasting customer loyalty and financial prosperity. Based on research (Wistedt, 2024), trust is a conceptualization of the three dimensions of benevolence, integrity, and competence based on consumer confidence in purchase intention. Additionally, commitment has a positive influence on purchase intention, which is consistent with previous research (Wang et al., 2016). A study conducted by Kim et al. (2008) in (Oliveira et al., 2017) revealed that several factors, including seller reputation, privacy concerns, data security, website information quality, and company reputation in general, significantly affect consumer trust in conducting e-commerce transactions.

H7: Trust affects purchase intention

Figure 1. Research Model



RESEARCH METHODS

This research employs a survey methodology coupled with quantitative analysis (Sauders et al., 2019). This study adopted structural equation modeling (SEM) as the data analysis technique. To validate the hypothesized research model, an online survey was administered to 280 respondents. The questionnaire included sociodemographic questions to collect sample data on occupation, education level, and gender. The survey used a semantic differential scale with an interval scale of 10 (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). The survey was administered between July and August 2024, involving a sample of 280 active Instagram social media users who were determined using a non-probability sampling technique, judgmental (purposive) sampling with criteria 1) Minimum age of 18 years 2) Active Instagram users 3) Located in Java Island.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The data obtained in this study are 280 respondents who are active Instagram users. The characteristics of respondents in this study the data are divided into several categories.

Table 1. Respondent Characteristics

Categories/Profiles		Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Female	182	65%
	Male	98	35%
Age	18-25 years old	188	67.14%
	26-40 years old	76	27.14%
	41-56 years old	16	5.71%
Occupation	Pelajar/Mahasiswa	224	80%
	PNS	14	5%
	Pegawai swasta	14	5%
	Wiraswasta	7	2.5%
	Others	21	7.5%
Domicile	West Java	210	75%
	Central Java	42	15%
	East Java	28	10%

Source : Research results, 2024

Based on the results of research conducted in the results obtained 1) Age 18-25 years as much as 88%, age 26-40 years as much as 27.14% years, and age 41-56 years as much as 5.71% 2) Respondents came from West Java as much as 75%, Central Java 15% and East Java 10% 3) A total of 65% identified themselves as women and 35% as men and 4) A total of 80% were students, civil servants, and private employees each 5%, self-employed 2.5% and others 7.5%.

Hypothesis testing through SEM

The normality test is a crucial first step in SEM analysis. The goal is to ensure that the data we use is by the basic assumptions of SEM, which is generally normally distributed (Hair et al., 2019). Multivariate normality analysis shows that all critical ratios are within the range of ± 2.58 . These results indicate that the data conform to a normal distribution, thus justifying its use in further analysis. After conducting the normality

test, the next step is to test for univariate and multivariate outlier data. Testing univariate and multivariate data outliers aims to avoid biased research results (Hair et al., 2019). To ensure the robustness of the research findings, univariate and multivariate outlier analysis is carried out to identify and address outliers.

Table 2. Measurement, Loadings, CR, and AVE

No	Questionnaire Statements	Constructs	Indicators	Loading Factor	CR	AVE
1	The presence of attractive interfaces positively impacts influencer credibility	Credibility	Physical attractiveness	0.807	0.797	0.568
2	The influencer's reliability convinces me of what the influencer is saying		Reliability	0.689		
3	The influencer's expertise makes me trust the influencer		Expertise	0.761		
4	The caption, video, image, photo of a post catches my attention	Content Characteristics	Invitation to submit content	0.717	0.839	0.567
5	Discounts and vouchers make me interested in seeing related content		Offense in content	0.758		
6	Content with good reviews makes me interested in viewing the content		Content rating	0.782		
7	I feel compelled to participate in a conversation or comment section after watching an engaging video		Interaction on video content	0.755		
8	My trust in the influencer's recommended brand increases my intention to buy their product	Brand Attitude	Trust in the brand	0.670	0.849	0.586
9	The influencer's recommended brand has a special place in my heart compared to other brands		Love for the brand	0.797		
10	The influencer's recommended brand always provides a positive experience whenever I buy their products		The brand does not disappoint	0.783		
11	The influencer's recommended brand is my first choice when seeking a particular product		Tendency to purchase products because of the brand	0.803		

12	The honesty of the influencer makes me more interested in buying their product's Trustworthiness	Trust	Honest	0.616	0.808	0.413
13	Recommendations from influencers provide a sense of security and trust to buy the product		Trustworthy	0.675		
14	A positive reputation influences my purchase intention		Honorable	0.608		
15	Good morals of the influencer are a consideration for my purchase interest		Moral	0.679		
16	Ethical actions of the influencer make me more confident to buy the products they offer		Ethical	0.673		
17	I will purchase a product or brand when the influencer appears sincere and not contrived when providing product recommendations		Original	0.601		
18	Product recommendations from influencers increase my interest in making a purchase	Purchase Intention	Intention to buy (transactional)	0.582	0.720	0.465
19	I would recommend this product to friends or family after seeing an influencer promote it		Intention to recommend	0.675		
20	I plan to purchase this product based on the review given by the influencer I follow		Plan to buy	0.775		

Source : Research results, 2024

The analysis result showed that the Z-score values of all data are within the range of -3 to 3, which indicates the absence of outliers in the research data. For multivariate outlier data, it is necessary to compare the chi-square table value with the highest output value of Mahalanobis distance. The value of the chi-square table is 269.977, while the highest value of the Mahalanobis distance output is 40.392. This result shows that the research data passes the normality test.

After the SEM assumption test, the next stage is construct evaluation. Construct validity ensures that the indicators used measure the latent variable to be measured, while construct reliability ensures the consistency of measurement of the latent variable. Based on Table 2, it shows that all research indicators factor-loading has a value > 0.4. This analysis indicates that the constructs in the research model are well-measured. The AVE value greater than 0.4 and the CR value greater than 0.70 for all indicators show that the measurement model has sufficient convergent validity and composite reliability.

Testing the feasibility of the research model is done by looking at the goodness of fit value in Table 3.

Table 3. Goodness of Fit (GoF) Model SEM-AMOS

Goodness of Fit Index	Analysis Result	Cut-off Value	Model Evaluation
CMIN\DF	1.667	< 2.000	Fit
Chi-Square	269.977	<i>Expected to be small</i>	Marginal
GFI	0.914	> 0.9	Fit
AGFI	0.889	> 0.9	Marginal
TLI	0.933	> 0.9	Fit
CFI	0.943	> 0.9	Fit
RMSEA	.049	< 0.08	Fit

Source: Research results, 2024

From the goodness of fit test results, the research model met five essential criteria and two indicators of marginal criteria. It shows that the research model has a fit level with empirical data, so it is feasible to use it to test the research hypothesis.

Hypothesis Testing

Path analysis, implemented through AMOS 24, was employed to assess the causal relationships among latent variables within the proposed structural equation model. Hypothesis testing was conducted to analyze the relationship between latent variables in the study (Taufik et al., 2024). The acceptance or rejection of the hypothesis is contingent upon the significance level (p-value) derived from the path analysis. If the p-value is smaller than the specified significance level ($\alpha = 0.05$), the alternative hypothesis is validated. The path coefficient (t-value) indicates the strength and direction of the causal relationship between latent variables within the model (Hair et al., 2019).

Table 4. Hypothesis Testing

Influence Relationship	CR	Probability	Decision
Trust ← Credibility	2.318	0.020	H1 Accepted
Trust ← Content Characteristics	-2.011	0.044	H2 Accepted
Brand Attitude ← Credibility	4.728	0.000***	H3 Accepted
Brand Attitude ← Content Characteristics	3.425	0.000***	H4 Accepted
Brand Attitude ← Trust	3.199	0.001	H5 Accepted
Purchase Intention ← Brand Attitude	2.972	0.003	H6 Accepted
Purchase Intention ← Trust	3.515	0.000***	H7 Accepted

Source : Research results, 2024

Note. *p<0.05; **p<0.1; ***p<0.000

The results of this study show that influencer credibility has a significant positive effect on Instagram users' trust. They are reinforcing the role of credibility in marketing effectiveness through Instagram. This finding supports research (Weismueller et al., 2020) that influencers' trustworthiness, reliability, attractiveness, and expertise determine how much audiences trust and utilize the information they share, especially on social media platforms. In contrast to the study conducted (Alcántara-Pilar et al., 2024), expertise emerges as a critical determinant of TikTok user trust. In the findings of this study, influencer attractiveness has a more substantial impact than influencer reliability and expertise on the Instagram platform. These results indicate that for Instagram users,

visual aspects such as the appearance or physical attractiveness of an influencer have more impact on their level of trust than other factors. It means the audiences on the Instagram platform are more attracted to and trust physically attractive influencers.

The results showed a negative relationship between content characteristics and Instagram user trust. It means that the more users are interested in the content characteristic of a post on Instagram, the lower their confidence in the platform or content on Instagram. It supports research (Ashley & Tuten, 2015) that authenticity and relevance of content are significant in creating consumer trust. When content is over-optimized with features such as invitations to interact, incentives, or ratings, users can feel that the content it has made does not prioritize providing honest information or real value but rather creating engagement. This is backed by research (Tu et al., 2023), which shows that some individuals use the number of “likes” and “shares” on social media as an indicator of the truth of the news, which causes them to be affected by misinformation.

The results showed a positive influence of credibility on brand attitude. According to research (Gubalane & Ha, 2023b; Nafees et al., 2021c), when consumers feel that influencers have high credibility, they are more likely to build trust in the recommended brand. In contrast to research conducted by (Nafees et al., 2021c) that makes expertise, goodwill, and trustworthiness indicators of influencer credibility, this study uses attractiveness, expertise, and reliability as indicators of credibility that can influence attitudes towards brands of Instagram users. However, despite the differences in the indicators used, both findings indicate a significant influence on the expertise indicator in influencing attitudes towards the brand of Instagram users.

The results showed a positive influence of content characteristics on brand attitude. Content characteristics consisting of trust, expertise, attractiveness, authenticity, and brand heritage (Monroe) Meng et al., 2024b) can increase the level of consumer involvement, belief, and attitude toward the brand through relevant content (Barger et al., 2016). However, it is worth pointing out the difference in perspective with other studies, which show different results, such as a study by Tu et al. (2023) found that content that relies too much on viral elements or prioritizes the number of likes and shares tends to reduce user trust. When users feel that the content is inauthentic or more focused on commercialization than providing value, this can reduce Instagram users' positive brand attitudes.

The results showed a positive influence between trust and brand attitude. Meanwhile (McGinnies & Ward, 1980) found that trust has a powerful impact on brand attitude. Consumer trust in brands begins to form when they feel confident in their reliability, credibility, and integrity. When consumers believe that the brand delivers on its advertised promises and consistently delivers quality, they develop positive perceptions of the brand. By reducing the perceived risk that consumers may feel when buying or using the product, consumers tend to feel more comfortable and confident to buy the brand's products, thus strengthening their positive attitude towards the brand.

The results showed a positive influence of brand attitude on the purchase intention of Instagram users. In line with research (Gubalane & Ha, 2023a), brand attitude has a significant effect on purchase intention. There are differences in the use of indicators to

measure the impact of brand attitude on purchase intentions as a good, favorable, effective, and reliable attitude (Fan et al., 2020), which can affect the purchase intention of social media users in general. This study uses trust in the brand, love for the brand, the brand does not disappoint, and the tendency to buy products because of the brand (P. C. S. Wu & Wang, 2011) as indicators that influence the purchase intention of Instagram users. However, despite the differences in the indicators used, the findings of these two studies show that brand attitude has a significant positive effect on the purchase intention of social media users.

The results showed a positive influence of trust on purchase intention. Followers' trust in influencers creates a positive loop where social media users benefit from product recommendations, increasing their intention to buy influencer-supported products (Alcántara-Pilar et al., 2024; Kim & Kim, 2021). Unlike the study (Alcántara-Pilar et al., 2024), which used three indicators of trust, this study used six indicators adopted from (McCroskey & Teven, 1999) to measure the effect of trust on purchase intention. However, both findings reveal that the honesty of influencers makes users more interested in buying brands recommended by influencers, which causes trust to have a significant positive effect on the purchase intention of social media users, be it TikTok or Instagram.

CONCLUSION

This study offers relevant practical implications for the effective management of influencer marketing on the Instagram platform. The research findings offer valuable insights that brands and companies can utilize to enhance their marketing strategies on this platform. First, they need to consider working with influencers with a high level of credibility and trustworthiness, especially those who demonstrate expertise and relevance to a particular brand category. Beauty products, for instance, can leverage influencer marketing to achieve better results with a background or reputation in the field. Secondly, brands need to pay attention to the characteristics of the content produced in each collaboration. The content should be designed to attract attention and reinforce the brand's image through relevant captions, visually appealing pictures and videos, and formats that resonate with the brand's message. Carefully crafted content can drive engagement with Instagram users and create a positive perception of the brand. By co-presenting with influencers who fit the brand's segment and producing credible and engaging content, brands can strengthen Instagram users' trust and, ultimately, increase purchase intention.

This study's findings are limited by its focus on Instagram users in Java. Future research should expand the sample to include users from diverse regions to enhance the generalizability of the results. Second, future research may consider incorporating additional theories or developing new theories to broaden the understanding of influencer marketing effectiveness. By addressing these limitations, future studies can make a more in-depth contribution to the perception of influencer marketing, particularly in the context of different platforms, cultures, and demographics.

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