

ANTECEDENTS AND OUTCOMES OF DIGITAL INFLUENCER ENDORSEMENT: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY



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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the effect of Digital Influencer Attractiveness and Brand Congruence on Brand Attitude, Purchase, and Repurchase Intention by adopting the Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) framework. Using a quantitative approach with a cross-sectional design, data were collected from 55 social media users in Cirebon selected through accidental sampling technique and processed using Path Analysis. The results showed that Attractiveness and Brand Congruence have a positive and significant effect on Brand Attitude. In addition, Attractiveness and Brand Attitude proved to have a significant effect on Purchase, which then became the strongest driving factor for Repurchase Intention. These findings also indicate the important mediating role of Brand Attitude and Purchase, considering that the direct paths from Brand Congruence to Purchase and Attractiveness to Repurchase Intention were found to be insignificant. Overall, this study concludes that an influencer marketing strategy that optimizes visual attractiveness and brand congruence is highly effective in shaping positive consumer attitudes, solidifying purchases, and driving repurchase intentions.

Keywords: Digital Influencer Attractiveness, Brand Congruence, Brand Attitude, Purchase Decision, Repurchase Intention

INTRODUCTION

Repurchase Intention is a critical driver of business sustainability and a primary goal of long-term marketing strategies. In the context of consumer behavior, repurchase intention is defined as the customer's desire to buy a product or service again in the future as a result of positive feedback received after making a Purchase and using the product (Janssen et al., 2022). Consumers who are satisfied with their decisions are likely to consider repurchasing. Today, consumers more frequently gather information about products through influencer marketing, Electronic Word of Mouth (eWOM), and social media marketing before making a Purchase Decision.

Amidst the advancement of the digital era, companies are increasingly aggressive in implementing social media marketing and collaborating with influencers as a main approach to introduce brands (Wha & Ki, 2019). This technology also changes the landscape of consumer decision-making, where they are more easily connected globally and obtain information thanks to influencer marketing strategies and eWOM (Mikro, 2024). Furthermore, the current evolution of technology is slowly bringing the marketing landscape into a new universe, such as the utilization of virtual spaces that mimic the real world (metaverse), thus demanding brands to continuously explore their digital interaction strategies (Monika et al., 2024). One Indonesian fashion brand that has actively leveraged these digital marketing developments is Erigo. Through intensive social media campaigns, collaborations with influencers, and various digital promotional activities, Erigo has successfully strengthened its brand awareness and expanded its market reach both domestically and internationally. The brand's marketing strategy relies heavily on influencer-generated content and online consumer interactions, making it a relevant context for examining how digital influencer attributes shape consumer perceptions, influence purchase decisions, and encourage repurchase intentions.

Influencer marketing is a strategy that involves popular individuals on social media with a large follower base to influence and persuade consumers to buy a product or service (Sokolova & Kefi, 2022). This strategy is effective because followers tend to consider the recommendations conveyed by influencers as credible information (Hasany et al., 2025; Lou & Yuan, 2019). Research shows that influencer marketing has a real positive impact on Purchase Decisions, especially through the factors of trust, attractiveness, and the level of consumer satisfaction with the brand (Journal & Economics, 2025; Veirman et al., 2017). Humans are often influenced by the opinions of others (Cialdini & Goldstein, 2014), a principle reaffirmed in the digital context where influencers act as the main driver of social proof in shaping preferences and Purchase Decisions (Rifani, 2023).

In the realm of digital marketing, digital influencers play an important role because they are perceived to have a higher level of authenticity and credibility, where a strong perception of credibility causes consumers to have lower resistance to the messages conveyed (Veirman et al., 2017). Besides credibility, the effectiveness of promotion is also largely determined by the "Match-up Hypothesis" principle, and the importance of this congruence has become a widely recognized basis in marketing literature (Kong, 2024). Specifically, this study is designed to examine the effect of Digital Influencer Attractiveness and Congruence on Brand Attitude and Purchase Decision, which ultimately leads to Repurchase Intention in the future (Torres & Augusto, 2018).

This phenomenon creates a critical demand for brand managers to empirically understand the mechanisms behind this success, especially how influencer attributes shape Brand Attitudes and drive consumer Purchase Decisions (Campbell & Rapp, 2020; Veirman et al., 2017). Therefore, this research is vital to present a strong theoretical framework as well as managerial strategies to effectively enhance Purchase Decisions and repurchase intentions in the virtual world (Reijmersdal & Gudmundsd, 2025; Torres et al., 2019; Zed et al., 2024).

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The Stimulus–Organism–Response (S-O-R) model is a fundamental theoretical framework in environmental psychology and marketing that is widely used to analyze consumer behavior (Veirman et al., 2017). The core of this model, which is rooted in the work of (Abidin & Abidin, 2021), is the basic principle that any external stimuli (Stimulus) will trigger an internal state (Organism), which then produces an action or (Torres & Augusto, 2018). Response (R) is the result of future behavior or loyalty, namely Repurchase Intention (Torres et al., 2019). In this study, Stimulus comprises Influencer Attractiveness and Brand Congruence; Organism comprises Brand Attitude; Response comprises Purchase Decision and Repurchase Intention.

Influencer Attractiveness

In the celebrity endorsement context, endorser attractiveness extends beyond mere physical appearance to encompass multi-dimensional constructs such as familiarity, likeability, and audience similarity (Ohanian, 1990; Till et al., 2013). Likeability, in particular, represents a positive affective bond driven by shared values or matching personalities, which allows digital influencers to become highly relatable to their followers. According to (Pradhan et al., 2015), strategically leveraging these non-physical attributes is vital for brands aiming to heighten awareness, fortify brand identity, and stimulate immediate consumer purchase desires. In the fast-moving fashion industry such as Erigo's market positioning among Gen Z in Cirebon an influencer who mirrors the audience's lifestyle is often perceived as more trustworthy than one who relies solely on conventional good looks. Consequently, when consumers identify with an endorser's persona, their psychological distance decreases, which empirically amplifies the persuasive power of the marketing campaign and effectively drives brand equity.

Brand Congruence

The concept of brand congruence within celebrity endorsement literature heavily relies on the Match-up Hypothesis, which posits that the effectiveness of an advertisement increases when there is a perceived fit between the endorser's image and the endorsed product (Kamins, 2013; Till et al., 2013). This congruence is structurally evaluated through two primary dimensions: relevance, which examines whether the influencer's expertise aligns with the product category, and appropriateness, which assesses the psychological harmony between the endorser's lifestyle and the brand's identity. According to (Kamins, 2013), a high degree of fit is predicted to shape positive brand attitudes, reduce consumer skepticism, and directly influence subsequent purchase decisions. In the context of Erigo's marketing strategy in Cirebon, selecting an influencer who genuinely embodies the trendy, casual *streetwear* culture creates a seamless match that resonates with local Gen Z consumers. Empirical evidence consistently underscores that when brand-endorser congruence is high, consumers

transfer their positive affect from the influencer to the brand more efficiently, thereby maximizing the campaign's statistical impact on consumer behavior.

Brand Attitude

Brand attitude is conceptually defined as a consumer's enduring, overall evaluation and psychological predisposition toward a specific brand (Keller, 2013). According to foundational branding literature, this construct is established through cognitive dimensions, such as beliefs about brand attributes, and affective components, which represent the emotional feelings attached to the brand (Keller, 2013). In this study, cultivating a highly favorable brand attitude is essential for Erigo as it strengthens its market positioning among Gen Z consumers in Cirebon. When local youth form positive associations with Erigo's trendy and accessible casual identity, they develop a psychological attachment that influences their consumption behavior. Empirical evidence demonstrates that a robust and positive brand attitude significantly enhances the likelihood of a brand being included in the consumer's consideration set, thereby accelerating actual purchase decisions (Alrwashdeh et al., 2023; Gayatri, 2024). Consequently, monitoring how external marketing stimuli shape these evaluations is critical to predicting the brand's long-term commercial success in emerging regional markets.

Purchase Decision

A purchase decision represents the final behavioral stage in the consumer decision-making process, wherein a consumer forms a definitive preference among alternative brands and executes an intention to buy (Kotler & Keller, 2016). This complex cognitive process dictates that consumers do not merely buy a product on impulse; instead, they conduct an in depth evaluation across several distinct dimensions, including brand choice, specific product item selection, purchase timing, and the chosen payment method (Hanaysha, 2026). In the context of Gen Z consumers evaluating Erigo in Cirebon, these sub decisions are highly dynamic and deeply influenced by regional lifestyle shifts and digital payment accessibility. Local youth systematically weigh whether Erigo's *streetwear* line aligns with their social identity, often coordinating their purchase timing with promotional events or payroll cycles. Prior empirical evidence consistently emphasizes that the culmination of these evaluative sub-stages into a final purchase decision is heavily dependent on preceding psychological factors, such as brand attitude and external social proof (Hanaysha, 2026). Understanding the mechanisms behind this behavioral outcome provides valuable strategic insights for fashion brands attempting to secure market share in expanding regional economies.

Repurchase Intentions

Repurchase intention is conceptually defined as a consumer's subjective probability, behavioral tendency, or explicit plan to continue purchasing a specific brand's products or services in the future (Spears & Singh, 2014). Within consumer behavior literature, this construct is multidimensionally operationalized through indicators such as transactional intentions (the desire to buy again), referential intentions (the willingness to recommend), and preferential intentions (maintaining the brand as a primary choice). In this study, fostering repurchase intention is the ultimate strategic goal for Erigo as it transitions from securing initial trials to building a loyal customer base among Gen Z consumers in Cirebon. Given the highly competitive nature of the regional *streetwear* market, ensuring that Cirebon's youth repeatedly return to Erigo's ecosystem rather than switching to emerging local competitors is vital for long-term market sustainability. Prior empirical evidence

consistently underscores that the immediate post-purchase decision experience serves as the strongest predictor of future behavioral outcomes, wherein positive reinforcement directly amplifies the probability of repeat purchases (Torres et al., 2019). Consequently, high repurchase intention serves as a critical barometer of deep seated brand equity and sustained commercial viability in expanding regional economies.

Research Hypothesis

This study aims related to influencer attractiveness, brand congruence, brand attitude, purchase decision, and repurchase intention. Based on the review of the literature and previous research, the hypothesis proposed in this study is as follows:

- H1: Attractiveness has a positive and significant effect on Brand Attitude.
- H2: Attractiveness has a positive and significant effect on Purchase Decision.
- H3: Attractiveness has an effect on Repurchase Intentions.
- H4: Brand Congruence has a positive and significant effect on Brand Attitude.
- H5: Brand Congruence has an effect on Purchase Decision.
- H6: Brand Congruence has an effect on Repurchase Intentions.
- H7: Brand Attitude has a positive and significant effect on Purchase Decision.
- H8: Purchase Decision has a positive and significant effect on Repurchase Intentions.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study implements a quantitative approach with a survey method as the main data collection instrument, referring to the positivistic paradigm in social research that allows for objective and measurable analysis of variables (Sugiyono, 2019). The research population includes active social media on Tiktok or Instagram users in the Cirebon area who have been exposed to promotions from digital influencers and have experience in making Purchase Decisions for Erigo brand products. The sampling technique adopts accidental sampling and purposive sampling, which allows for the selection of respondents based on specific criteria relevant to the research objectives. Based on the sample determination indicators, the minimum number required is 50 respondents, and the data successfully collected and validly processed reached 55 respondents. which has been validated through expert judgment and pilot testing. The validity of the construct was verified using confirmatory factor analysis, while the reliability was tested using Cronbach's alpha coefficient with a threshold of at least 0.7 as an acceptable indicator of internal consistency (Ardan et al., 2024). The data collection was carried out over a three-month period, starting from November 1, 2025 to January 15, 2026, focusing on four main variables: Digital Influencer Attractiveness, Brand Congruence, Brand Attitude, Purchase, Repurchase Intention.

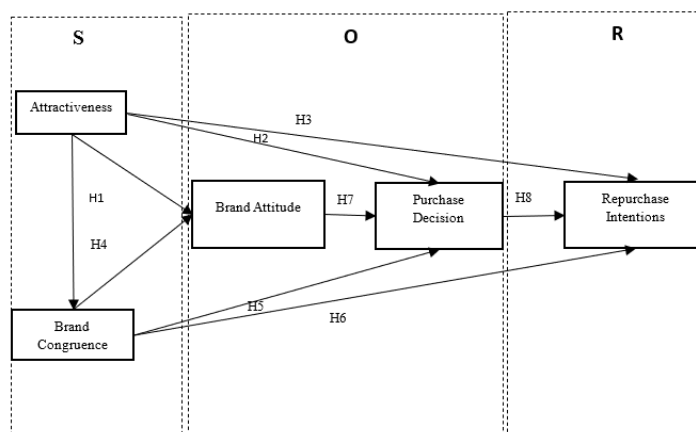
Data analysis used the Path Analysis technique to test the research hypotheses regarding the causal effect of independent variables on the dependent variables as well as the mechanism of mediation effects (Kusnendi, 2006), in line with the Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) framework to ensure comprehensive coverage of the measured constructs (Veirman et al., 2017). Statistical data processing utilized the latest version of AMOS software. The structural model evaluation does not only consider statistical significance (P-Value), but also tests the feasibility of the model through a series of Goodness of Fit criteria (such as CMIN/DF, RMSEA, TLI, and CFI) to validate the regression model (E.Schumacker,

2022). In addition, a trimming approach was carried out to refine the model's fit by eliminating insignificant paths.

This systematic approach to data collection and analysis is supported by a strong theoretical foundation, aiming to produce findings that are not only statistically valid but also applicable in the practical context of digital marketing management. The interpretation of results will focus on the decomposition of effects, namely the relative direct and indirect contributions of each independent variable to the variations in Purchase Decision and Repurchase Intention (Torres et al., 2019), which can provide a deeper understanding of the dynamics of consumer behavior in the digital era..

Research Model

This research model illustrates the causality relationship and mediation mechanism between independent variables (Influencer Attractiveness and Brand Congruence) on the main dependent variable (Repurchase Intention), through the role of mediating variables (Brand Attitude and Purchase Decision). Based on the Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) framework, this model can be illustrated as follows:



The picture of this research model shows that the independent variables (Stimulus phase) have a direct or indirect relationship with the final dependent variable (Response phase), which is comprehensively tested through Path Analysis. This study uses a quantitative approach with a survey method, where data is collected through a questionnaire instrument with a Likert scale. The data analysis technique used is Path Analysis assisted by AMOS software to test the significance of the effect, both partially and through the mediation effect between variables. The results of this study are expected to provide deeper strategic insights for brand management (such as Erigo) in optimizing their influencer marketing strategies, namely by focusing on influencer attractiveness and brand congruence to shape positive consumer attitudes, encourage Purchase Decisions, and guarantee the sustainability of Repurchase Intention in the digital era.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

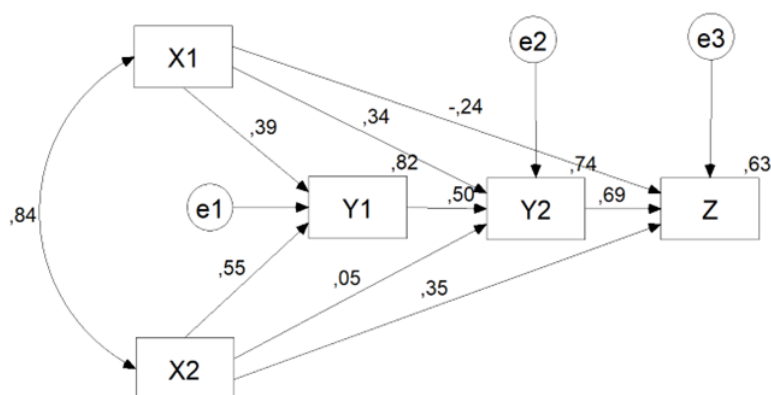
The following are the research results obtained from the analysis using SPSS and AMOS, namely:

Table 1.
Validity and Reliability

Variable	Indicator	Calculated-r	r-Tabel	Status	Cronbach's Alpha	Status
Attractiveness (X1)	X1.1-X1.6	0,696-0,864	0,266	Valid	0,893	Reliable
Brand (X2)	X2.1-X2.2	0,956-0,958	0,266	Valid	0,908	Reliable
Brand Attitude (Y1)	Y1.1-Y1.2	0,954-0,955	0,266	Valid	0,902	Reliable
Purchase Decision (Y2)	Y2.1-Y2.2	0,923-0,935	0,266	Valid	0,841	Reliable
Repurchase Intentions (Z)	Z.1-Z.2	0,895-0,900	0,266	Valid	0,758	Reliable

Source: Data processed (2026)

Figure 1.
Path Analysis (Full model)



Source: Data processed (2026)

Table 2.
Goodness of Fit Index (Full Model)

Indicator (Goodness of Fit)	Reference Value (Cut-off Value)	Estimation Result	Remarks
P-Value	$\geq 0,05$	0,132	Good Fit
CMIN/DF	$\leq 2,00 / \leq 3,00$	2,268	Good Fit
RMSEA	$\leq 0,08$	0,153	Poor Fit
GFI	$\geq 0,90$	0,984	Good fit
CFI	$\geq 0,90$	0,995	Good Fit

Source: Data processed (2026)

Table 3.
Path Coefficient Analysis (Full Model)

Path Relationship	Estimate	P-Value	Remarks
H1: Attractiveness (X1) → Brand Attitude (Y1)	0,172	***	Highly Significant
H2: Attractiveness (X1) → Purchase Decision (Y2)	0,140	0,016	Significant
H3: Attractiveness (X1) → Repurchase Intentions (Z)	-0,081	0,172	Not Significant
H4: Brand (X2) → Brand Attitude (Y1)	0,587	***	Highly Significant
H5: Brand (X2) → Purchase Decision (Y2)	0,049	0,749	Not Significant
H6: Brand (X2) → Repurchase Intentions (Z)	0,286	0,031	Significant
H7: Brand Attitude (Y1) → Purchase Decision (Y2)	0,465	0,002	Significant
H8: Purchase Decision (Y2) → Repurchase Intentions	0,575	***	Highly Significant

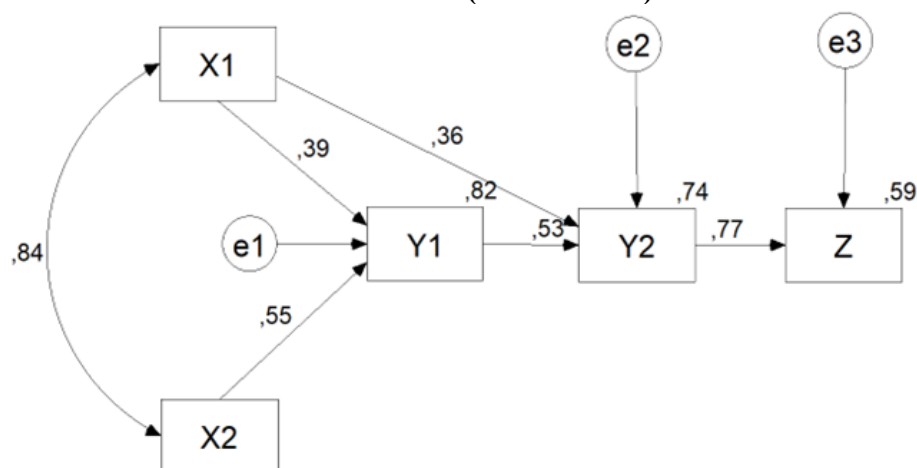
Source: Data processed (2026)

Table 4.
Decomposition of Effects Between Variables (Full Model)

Path	Direct Effect	Indirect Effect	Total Effect
Influencer Attractiveness (X1) → Brand Attitude (Y1)	0,391	0,000	0,391
Influencer Attractiveness (X1) → Purchase Decision (Y2)	0,344	0,196	0,540
Influencer Attractiveness (X1) → Repurchase Intention (Z)	-0,238	0,373	0,135
Brand (X2) → Brand Attitude (Y1)	0,552	0,000	0,552
Brand (X2) → Purchase Decision (Y2)	0,050	0,277	0,327
Brand (X2) → Repurchase Intention (Z)	0,349	0,226	0,575
Brand Attitude (Y1) → Purchase Decision (Y2)	0,502	0,000	0,502
Purchase Decision (Y2) → Repurchase Intention (Z)	0,691	0,000	0,691

Source: Data processed (2026)

Figure 2.
Path Analysis (Final Model)



Source: Data processed (2026)

Table 5.
Goodness of Fit Index (Final Model)

Indicator (Goodness of Fit)	Reference Value (Cut-off Value)	Estimation Result	Remarks
P-Value	$\geq 0,05$	0,143	Good Fit
CMIN/DF	$\leq 2,00/ \leq 3,00$	1,715	Good Fit
RMSEA	$\leq 0,08$	0,115	Marginal Fit
GFI	$\geq 0,90$	0,955	Good fit
CFI	$\geq 0,95$	0,990	Good Fit

Source: Data processed (2026)

Tabel 6.
Path Coefficient Analysis (Final Model)

Path Relationship	Estimate	P-Value	Remarks
H1: Attractivenees (X1) → Brand Attitude (Y1)	0,172	***	Highly Significant
H2: Attractivenees (X1) → Purchase Decision (Y2)	0,140	0,016	Significant
H4: Brand (X2) → Brand Attitude (Y1)	0,587	***	Highly Significant
H7: Brand Attitude (Y1) → Purchase Decision (Y2)	0,465	0,002	Significant
H8: Purchase Decision (Y2) → Repurchase Intentions	0,575	***	Highly Significant

Source: Data processed (2026)

Table 7.
Decomposition of Effects Between Variables (Final Model)

Path)	Direct Effect	Indirect Effect	Total Effect
Influencer Attractiveness (X1) → Brand Attitude(Y1)	0,391	0,000	0,391
Influencer Attractiveness (X1) → Purchase Decision (Y2)	0,360	0,208	0,568
Brand (X2) → Brand Attitude (Y1)	0,552	0,000	0552
Brand Attitude (Y1) → Purchase Decision (Y2)	0,532	0,000	0,532
Purchase Decision (Y2) → Repurchase Intention (Z)	0,770	0,000	0,770

Source: Data processed (2026)

Validity and Reliability Test

Before conducting the path analysis, the questionnaire instrument was evaluated through validity and reliability tests. The validity test was conducted by comparing the calculated r-value with the r-table (0.266 at df=53 and a 5% significance level). The test results showed that all indicators on the questionnaire were declared VALID because the calculated r-value was greater than the r-table. For the reliability test, all variables had a Cronbach's Alpha value in the range of 0.758 to 0.908. Because all values exceeded the 0.70 threshold, the instrument was declared highly reliable and stable for further analysis.

Initial Model Testing (Full Model)

The Path Analysis approach began by testing the full structural model (Full Model) which included all eight research hypotheses (Kusnendi, 2006). This comprehensive testing aims to see how external elements (Stimulus) trigger internal evaluation processes (Organism) until they culminate in consumer behavior (Response) in the context of influencer marketing (Veirman et al., 2017).

Model Feasibility Test (Goodness of Fit - Initial Model)

lthough some fit indices such as CFI (0.995) and GFI (0.984) have met the Good Fit criteria, this initial model is not yet fully ideal. The high estimated error value indicated by an RMSEA of 0.153 (well above the tolerance limit of ≤ 0.08) and a low AGFI value (0.757) indicate that the model still has structural disturbances or contains irrelevant paths.

Path Coefficient Analysis (Full Model)

Analysis of Rejected Hypotheses: In the initial model, two hypotheses were found to be empirically rejected (P-Value > 0.05). First, the path of Influencer Attractiveness to Repurchase Intention was rejected (P=0.172). Theoretically, this is logical because the visual attractiveness of a public figure alone is not strong enough to guarantee future consumer loyalty without the actual experience of using the product. Second, the path of Brand Congruence to Purchase Decision was also rejected (P=0.749). This means that merely matching the image between the influencer and the brand does not necessarily trigger instant purchasing actions; this congruence must first be processed into a sense of "liking" or a positive attitude (Brand Attitude) in the minds of consumers.

Decomposition of Effects Between Variables (Full Model)

To dissect the complexity of relationships before trimming, the decomposition of effects separates the direct and indirect effects of the initial model (Kusnendi, 2006).

- **The Unique Phenomenon of Attractiveness ($X1 \rightarrow Z$):** In the initial model, influencer attractiveness recorded a negative direct effect (-0.238) on Repurchase Intention. This indicates that merely seeing an attractive influencer does not create long-term loyalty. However, when accompanied by success in creating a purchase decision (indirect effect), the effect turns strongly positive (0.373). This concludes that the influencer's charm functions to trigger current purchasing actions, and it is that experience that will later build repurchase intentions..
- **Full Mediation of Congruence ($X2 \rightarrow Y2$):** The direct effect of the Brand on Purchase Decision is very weak (0.050), but its indirect effect through Brand Attitude is much greater (0.277). The meaning is, brand congruence will not result in optimal sales if it fails to build a positive attitude in the minds of consumers first.

Final Model Testing (Final Model)

The elimination of insignificant paths changes the constellation of relationships between variables within the S-O-R framework. Therefore, the simplified structural model (trimmed model) must be re-estimated (re-run analysis). This second stage of evaluation has a dual purpose: on the one hand, to verify whether the trimming successfully improved the model's fit index (Goodness of Fit) so that it is more parsimonious and fits with the empirical data matrix (E.Schumacker, 2022); and on the other hand, to recalculate the path coefficients to determine the absolute magnitude of the effect of the accepted core hypotheses (Kusnendi, 2006).

Decomposition of Effects Between Variables (Final Model)

After the insignificant paths were eliminated, the decomposition of effects in the Final Model displays an architecture of causality mechanisms that is pure and has been statistically validated.

- **Pure Strength of Brand Congruence:** The Brand Congruence variable channels its entire contribution directly (55.2% or 0.552) to the formation of Brand Attitude without needing a mediating variable. This proves that precision in selecting influencers whose lifestyle is in harmony with the Erigo product identity is the most absolute key to creating a sense of liking (favorable evaluation) instantly in the minds of the audience.
- **Partial Mediation on Attractiveness:** Influencer Attractiveness ($X1$) has a total contribution of 56.8% (0.568) to Purchases. This contribution is driven by two main engines: the push for direct transactions (36.0%) and the mediation effect through Brand Attitude (20.8%). These findings provide important managerial implications: highly charming influencers (such as Raffi Ahmad) are not only effective for hard-selling (triggering instant purchases), but their sales effect will be maximized much more if their promotional content is designed to strengthen the brand image first. This brand image strengthening and interaction can be further optimized through the utilization of creative space in the metaverse ecosystem, which serves as a forum for immersive digital community collaboration and innovation (Monica et al., 2024).
- **Absolute Predictor of Repurchase Intention:** In line with the conceptual framework of consumer behavior (Torres et al., 2019), the Purchase path ($Y2$) to Repurchase Intention (Z) produces the most massive influence coefficient in this entire model, namely 77.0% (0.770) absolutely and directly. This empirical evidence

serves as the ultimate conclusion that loyalty cannot be formed solely from the influencer's charm in the Stimulus phase. Loyalty demands actual proof organically; audiences must go through the Purchase phase and experience the quality of Erigo products firsthand so that the intention to repurchase in the future can be solidly formed.

CONCLUSION

Influencer Attractiveness and Brand Congruence are proven to positively and significantly shape Brand Attitude. Influencer Attractiveness and Brand Attitude are also able to directly drive consumer Purchases. Purchase is the strongest and most crucial predictor of Repurchase Intention. However, brand congruence does not automatically make consumers immediately conduct transactions, and simply using attractive influencers does not have a direct influence on Repurchase Intention without being mediated by attitude evaluation and purchasing actions first. The S-O-R mechanism validates that the most optimal path to increasing loyalty is through strengthening Purchases driven by positive Brand Attitudes.

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