
THE ROLE OF INFLUENCER CREDIBILITY AND FLASH SALES IN DRIVING PURCHASE DECISIONS AMONG TIKTOK LIVE CONSUMERS



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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to examine how consumer purchasing decisions regarding the TikTok Live feature in Cirebon City are influenced by influencer credibility and flash sales. PLS-SEM analysis is used in this study's quantitative methodology. Customers who have interacted or completed transactions via live streams on the TikTok platform are the study's participants. Purposive sampling was used to gather the research sample, which consisted of 140 participants and predetermined respondent criteria. A Likert scale was used in a questionnaire to gather data. The findings show that consumer purchasing decisions on TikTok Live are positively and significantly impacted by influencer credibility. Additionally, it was discovered that flash sale tactics significantly and favorably affected consumer purchasing decisions. Additional data indicates that the flash sale strategy has the strongest effect on increasing customer purchasing decisions. These results underscore the importance for digital marketers to prioritize the implementation of strategic limited-time promotions supported by the selection of credible influencers to maximize consumer purchasing decisions within the live commerce ecosystem.

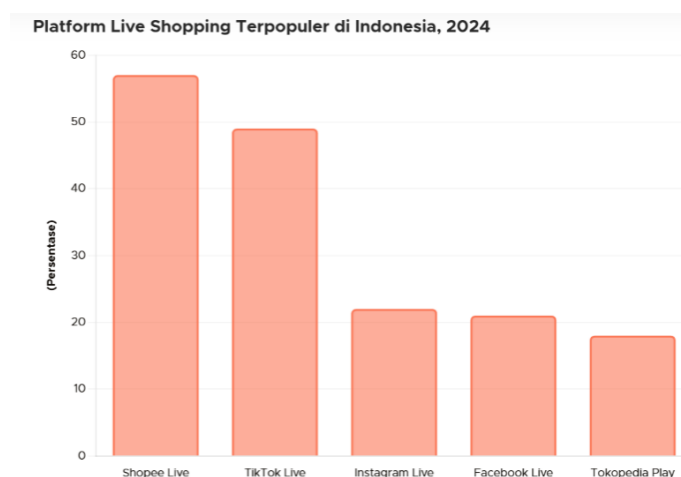
Keywords: Influencer Credibility, Flash Sales, Purchase Decisions, TikTok Live

INTRODUCTION

Particularly among Indonesians, the quick development of digital technology has significantly altered consumer purchasing habits. Live commerce, which involves buying and selling through live streams with real-time interaction between buyers, influencers, and sellers, has become a rapidly expanding innovation. This platform changes the way customers engage with brands; instead of just perusing a passive catalog, they now have an engaging and interactive shopping experience. TikTok Live has become a key component of live commerce in Indonesia, experiencing the fastest growth, particularly among the younger generation who are highly interested in influencer recommendations and enjoy dynamic content.

The market potential for live commerce in Indonesia is enormous, given that the number of internet users has reached over 212 million, with 67% of them actively making transactions via e-commerce platforms. This growth is also supported by a shift in consumer habits toward consuming short-form video content and live streams. Data from the Goodstats report (2024) reveals an interesting phenomenon: over 60% of TikTok users have made spontaneous purchases while watching a live stream. This indicates that features within live streams have a significant ability to influence consumers' final decisions in a relatively very short time.

Figure 1.
The Most Popular Live Shopping Platforms in Indonesia



Source : Goodstats, 2024

Amid this massive growth, credibility has become a crucial factor in purchasing decisions. The emergence of consumer complaints regarding discrepancies between purchased products and the information provided by influencers indicates that trust in information sources is a cornerstone (Febriah et al., 2023). Influencers do more than just shape consumer perceptions and build trust. Their credibility is determined not only by their level of popularity, but also by their consistency, honesty, and expertise regarding the messages they convey to their audience (Ki et al., 2023).

The use of scarcity tactics, such as temporary flash sales, is just as important in influencing consumer reaction as the product itself. These techniques successfully generate

an emotional impulse and a sense of urgency that speed up decision-making without necessitating protracted logical thought (Dwi Nuraini & Ibnu Fitroh Sukono Putra, 2024). This aligns with the Stimulus-Response principle, whereby marketing stimuli in live streaming directly generate a response in the form of a purchase. It has been demonstrated that the time pressure of a flash sale increases a product's perceived value and motivates customers to act quickly (Cialdini, 2009).

Even though there has been a lot of research on digital marketing, the majority of earlier studies have looked at influencer credibility and promotional tactics independently. Additionally, prior studies have concentrated more on purchase intent than actual purchase decisions, which represent tangible consumer actions on the TikTok Live platform. Studies looking at the simultaneous impact of these two factors are still lacking, especially in a geographical setting like the city of Cirebon. Examining the degree to which these marketing theories are still applicable outside of urban areas is made possible by the social characteristics of Cirebon's population, which is going through a digital transformation. Thus, the purpose of this study is to examine how flash sales and influencer credibility affect TikTok Live users' decisions to buy in Cirebon.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Influencer Credibility

The degree to which consumers believe an influencer has the knowledge, honesty, and authority to offer pertinent information about a good or service is known as the influencer's credibility. Credibility is an essential component of the digital marketing ecosystem because it acts as a conduit for trust in situations where customers cannot physically assess a product. According to current literature, influencers are seen as third parties with the power to sway consumer decisions through the personal and professional traits they exhibit. An influencer's credibility is the degree to which consumers believe a person has the knowledge, honesty, and authority to offer pertinent information about a good or service. Credibility is an essential component of the digital marketing ecosystem because it acts as a bridge of trust in situations where customers cannot physically assess a product. (Brown & Hayes, in Erica Maryati et al., 2023) (Khan & Asim, 2025) assert that a high level of credibility is positively correlated with consumer purchase intent, where audiences tend to be more open to receiving information and acting on the recommendations provided.

The Source Credibility Model is the main theoretical framework for comprehending this phenomenon. It asserts that the integration of the dimensions of expertise related to the depth of product knowledge, trustworthiness encompassing honesty and transparency, and attractiveness involving the capacity to develop emotional closeness through parasocial interaction determines the effectiveness of communication (Ohanian, 1990) Tille, 2020 observes that these credibility indicators become more dynamic in the context of live commerce platforms like TikTok Live due to the degree of authenticity during live broadcasts, the ability to respond to questions on the spur of the moment, and the clarity of delivery (Zhang, 2024). Recent research indicates that real-time interactions on TikTok reinforce perceptions of authenticity, triggering positive emotional responses, where the aspects of expertise and trustworthiness have proven to be the strongest predictors in validating product value in the eyes of digital consumers (Dwivedi et al., 2021)

Influencer credibility is therefore positioned in this study as an external stimulus that directly affects consumer beliefs and purchase decisions (B. Adapon et al., 2024)

Flash Sale

According to (Kotler & Armstrong, 2018), flash sales are a form of short-term price promotion that is effective in increasing perceived value and encouraging consumers to make purchases more quickly than they would under normal circumstances. This strategy deliberately creates time pressure and a perception of scarcity to trigger a rapid response from consumers. Flash sales have been shown to influence shopping behavior by triggering significant emotional arousal (Martaleni et al., 2022). Additionally, how customers interpret the urgency message has a significant impact on how well flash sales increase sales volume (Aqsa et al., 2024). Strict time constraints act as a powerful psychological nudge, leading customers to disregard logical analysis in order to take advantage of a limited-time offer. These temporary offers have become a standard in digital marketing to instantly capture audience interest (Nguyen-Van et al., n.d 2024.).

According to (Cialdini, 2009) referenced in (Martaleni et al., 2022), the scarcity principle, which influences three important aspects of consumer perception: time pressure, perceived scarcity, and price attractiveness is the foundation for the efficacy of these time-limited promotions. The degree to which customers feel compelled to act before the promotion expires is known as time pressure. The degree of perceived product scarcity that results from stock being shown as limited and declining in real time during a live broadcast is known as perceived scarcity. Price attractiveness, on the other hand, is the price's strong appeal and the main factor that makes customers believe they are getting a better deal than they would at the regular price. The combination of these three elements creates the Fear of Missing Out phenomenon, which is crucial in accelerating the formation of purchasing decisions on interactive platforms (Aqsa et al., 2024). Without clear elements of scarcity and urgency, consumers will tend to postpone transactions and switch to other options (Nguyen-Van et al., n.d.2024).

Purchase Decisions

A purchase decision, according to Kotler & Armstrong (2018), is the point at which customers actually decide which product best suits their needs and preferences. In the digital world, this choice is the outcome of an assessment process involving a variety of data and stimuli encountered during social media browsing, rather than just a final action. In the digital world, this decision is not merely a final action but the result of an evaluation process involving various information and stimuli received while browsing social media. A positive purchase decision indicates that consumers place genuine trust in the information provided by the seller or intermediary (Watonia, 2024). On interactive platforms like TikTok Live, this decision often occurs rapidly due to the ease of accessing information and the direct, real-time interaction between viewers and content creators (Abadi & Ivoniasari, 2024). Therefore, a platform's ability to convince consumers in the final moments is crucial in determining whether a potential buyer will complete a transaction or not.

Making a purchase decision is a methodical process. These phases include identifying a need, gathering information, weighing options, making a purchase, and acting afterward, according to Watonia (2024). When consumers see an advertisement and feel they need something, they recognize a need. They then look for more information to persuade themselves. Evaluation becomes crucial as consumers

compare benefits and prices before finally taking action to purchase the product while the live broadcast is still ongoing. Finally, the feeling of satisfaction after purchasing will determine whether or not the consumer will shop again in the future (Nguyen-Van et al., n.d.2024). In this study, the purchase decision is viewed as a tangible response from consumers after being exposed to stimuli in the form of influencer credibility and flash sale promotions (Aqsa et al., 2024).

Stimulus-Response Theory

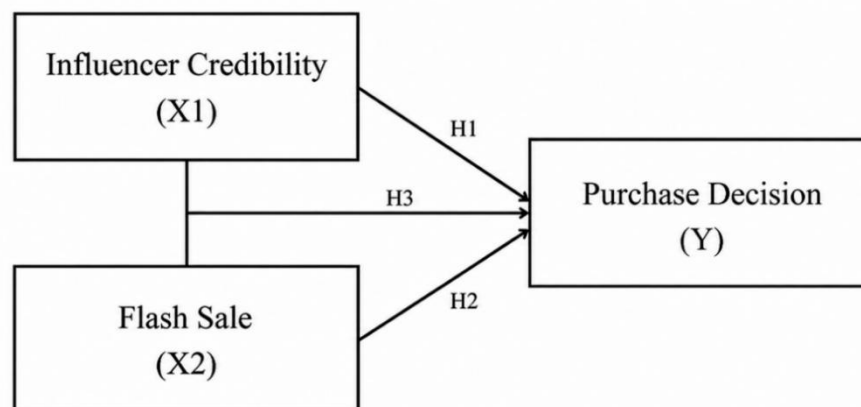
The Stimulus-Response model, which has its roots in behavioral psychology and mass communication, serves as the main theoretical framework for this investigation. This model holds that certain stimuli that elicit predictable responses are what lead to consumer behavior. In their seminal work, Hovland et al. (1953) clarified that the quality of the message and the reliability of the source have a significant impact on changes in attitudes and behavior. Within TikTok's live commerce ecosystem, the variables of Influencer Credibility and Flash Sale strategies act as marketing stimuli designed to attract attention and build audience trust. These stimuli are then processed by consumers as individuals, ultimately resulting in a response in the form of a purchase decision. According to the SR model, a linear and significant response will be produced if the stimuli are strong and positive. The following theories are put forth in light of this framework:

H1: Purchase decisions on the TikTok Live feature are positively and significantly impacted by influencer credibility.

H2: Purchase decisions on the TikTok Live feature are positively and significantly impacted by flash sales.

H3: Purchase decisions on the TikTok Live feature are positively and significantly impacted by both influencer credibility and flash sales.

Figure 2.
Research Framework



RESEARCH METHOD

In order to test and examine the cause-and-effect relationship between independent and dependent variables, this study uses a quantitative approach with a causal design. This study's main goal is to clarify how much consumer purchasing decisions on the TikTok platform's live commerce feature are influenced by influencer credibility and flash sale tactics. All TikTok users in Cirebon who have used the live streaming feature for transactions are included in the study's population. Purposive sampling was used because it

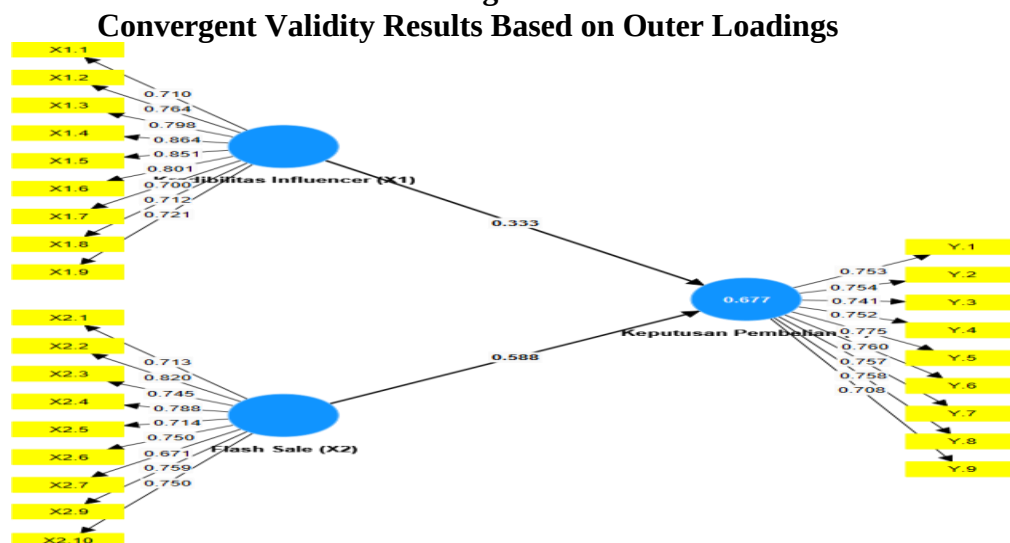
is impossible to pinpoint the precise size of this population. Residents of Cirebon who have purchased at least one product through TikTok Live and who follow at least one active influencer on the platform are the specified criteria for respondents. The guidelines put forth by Hair et al. (2021), which recommend a minimum ratio of five to ten times the number of observation indicators, were used to determine the sample size in this study. In order to guarantee the stability of the statistical estimates, 140 respondents were chosen for the study, which employed 28 indicators in total. An online survey with a 1–5 Likert scale was used to gather primary data.

The research instrument was developed through a process of adapting an instrument previously validated by earlier researchers to ensure its relevance to the live commerce context. The Influencer Credibility variable was measured through the dimensions of trust, expertise, and likability, as outlined in the theory (Ohanian, 1990). The Flash Sale variable was operationalized through the indicators of time pressure and the principle of scarcity as developed by Cialdini (2009). Meanwhile, the Purchase Decision variable was measured using the dimensions of product stability, purchasing habits, and the speed of purchase decision-making according to the theory (Kotler & Armstrong, 2018). Before conducting extensive data collection, the researcher conducted a pilot test of the instrument on 30 respondents with characteristics similar to the main sample. This stage aimed to detect potential ambiguities in the questionnaire items. The instrument was judged appropriate for use in this study because the test results demonstrated that every item had a Corrected Item-Total Correlation value above 0.3 (valid) and a Cronbach's Alpha value above 0.7 (reliable).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Using SmartPLS software, the results of this study were analyzed in two main phases: the measurement model and the structural model. In order to measure each concept in the model consistently and accurately, the first step sought to validate the research instruments. Hypothesis testing was carried out to determine the degree to which influencer credibility and flash sale tactics affect customer purchasing decisions on the TikTok Shop platform after the validity and reliability requirements were satisfied.

Figure 3.



Convergent Validity

Tabel 1.
Convergent Validity

Construct	Item	Loading Faktor	Description
Influencer Credibility	X1.1	0.710	Valid
	X1.2	0.764	Valid
	X1.3	0.798	Valid
	X1.4	0.864	Valid
	X1.5	0.851	Valid
	X1.6	0.801	Valid
	X1.7	0.700	Valid
	X1.8	0.712	Valid
	X1.9	0.721	Valid
Flash Sale	X2.1	0.713	Valid
	X2.2	0.820	Valid
	X2.3	0.745	Valid
	X2.4	0.788	Valid
	X2.5	0.714	Valid
	X2.6	0,750	Valid
	X2.7	0,671	Valid
	X2.9	0,759	Valid
	X2.10	0.750	Valid
Purchase Decision	Y.1	0.753	Valid
	Y.2	0.754	Valid
	Y.3	0.741	Valid
	Y.4	0.752	Valid
	Y.5	0.775	Valid
	Y.6	0.760	Valid
	Y.7	0.757	Valid
	Y.8	0.758	Valid
	Y.9	0.708	Valid

Source: Data Processing Results (2026)

To make sure that each indicator has a strong relationship with its corresponding latent construct based on factor loading criteria, convergent validity testing was carried out. As stated by (Hair et al., 2021), if the factor loading value is greater than 0.70, an indicator is deemed to have sufficient convergent validity. The majority of the indicators in this study met this criterion, according to the analysis results; however, one indicator in the Flash Sale variable, X2.7, had a value of 0.671. This indicator was kept even though it was below 0.70 because its value stayed above the tolerance threshold of 0.60 and its contribution did not cause the Flash Sale variable's Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value to fall below the 0.50 threshold. Therefore, it can be said that every indicator in this study has a high degree of validity and is appropriate for measuring the latent variables being studied.

Discriminant Validity

Tabel 2.
Discriminant Validity

Variable	Influencer Credibility	Flash Sale	Purchase Decision
Influencer Credibility	0.771		
Flash Sale	0.563	0.747	
Purchase Decision	0.664	0.776	0.751

Source: Data Processing Results (2026)

To make sure that every construct in the model is distinct from the others, discriminant validity was examined. The variables Influencer Credibility (0.771), Flash Sale (0.747), and Purchase Decision (0.751) had root-mean-square Average Variance Extracted values that were higher than the correlation values between the other constructs according to the Fornell-Larcker criteria. Because each indicator can accurately represent its construct without overlap or non-overlap, this demonstrates that every variable in the study has satisfied the requirements for discriminant validity.

Average Variance Extracted (AVE)

Table 3.
Average Variance Extracted

Construct	AVE
Influencer Credibility (X1)	0.595
Flase Sale (X2)	0.558
Purchase Decision (Y)	0.564

Source: Data Processing Result (2026)

All three constructs in this study satisfied the minimum criterion of ≥ 0.50 , according to the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) test results. The AVE values were 0.564 for Purchase Decision, 0.558 for Flash Sale, and 0.595 for Influencer Credibility. These numbers show that each indicator's corresponding construct can account for more than half of its variance. Accordingly, using the standards set by (Hair et al., 2021), every construct in this research model has proven to have strong convergent validity and can be used in further analysis.

Composite Reliability

Table 4.
Composite Reliability

Construct	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability
Influencer Credibility	0.914	0.929
Flase Sale	0.901	0.919
Purchase Decision	0.903	0.921

Source: Data Processing Results (2026)

The degree of internal consistency of the indicators that comprise a latent construct was assessed through a reliability assessment. according to the standards set by Hair et al. (2021), states that if a construct's Composite Reliability value is higher than 0.70, it is

deemed reliable. The Composite Reliability values for the Influencer Credibility variable are 0.929, Flash Sale at 0.919, and Purchase Decision at 0.921, according to the data analysis results in Table 4. The fact that all of these values are significantly higher than the necessary minimum threshold shows how reliable the instruments used in this investigation are. Additionally, Cronbach's Alpha values that surpass the 0.70 threshold for each construct 0.914 for Influencer Credibility, 0.901 for Flash Sale, and 0.903 for Purchase Decision support internal consistency. These results demonstrate that all items in the questionnaire are consistent and stable, thereby ensuring that the measurement model in this study meets.

R-Square

Table 5.
R-Square

Construct	R Square	R Square Adjusted
Purchase Decision	0.677	0.673

Source: Data Processing Results (2026)

The Purchase Decision variable has an R-squared value of 0.677 and an adjusted R-squared value of 0.673 based on the study results in Table 5. This suggests that the variables of influencer credibility and flash sales account for 67.7% of the variation in consumer purchase decisions on TikTok Shop. On the other hand, other factors outside the purview of this research model are responsible for the residual variation of 32.3%. With regard to the purchase decision variable, this value is classified as moderate to strong, suggesting that the research model has good predictive power. Thus, in compliance with the standards (Hair et al., 2021), the model created in this study is appropriate for making research findings.

Path Coefficient

Table 6.
Path Coefficient

Construct	Original Sample (O)	T statistics	P Values	Description
Influencer Credibility (X1) -> Purchase Decision (Y)	0.333	4.531	0.000	Positive and Significant
Flase Sale (X2) -> Purchase Decision (Y)	0.588	7.991	0.000	Positive and Significant

Source: Data Processing Results (2026)

All of the relationships between the variables in this research model are statistically significant, according to the results of the structural equation modeling estimates using the PLS-SEM approach via the bootstrapping procedure. According to the standards (Hair et al., 2021), a hypothesis is deemed significant if its P-value is less than 0.05 and its T-statistic value is greater than 1.96. With an Original Sample value of 0.333, a T-statistic of 4.531, and a P-value of 0.000, the data analysis results demonstrate that Influencer Credibility has a favorable and significant impact on Purchase Decision. Additionally, an Original Sample value of 0.588, a T-statistic of 7.991, and a P-value of 0.000 showed that the Flash Sale variable had a positive and significant impact on Purchase Decisions. These findings

demonstrate that consumer purchasing decisions on TikTok Live Shop are significantly influenced by both influencer credibility and flash sale tactics.

The Effect of Influencer Credibility on Purchase Decisions

With a T-statistic value of 4.531 and a P-value of 0.000, the study's findings show that influencer credibility has a favorable and significant impact on purchasing decisions. This implies that consumers are more likely to make a purchase when an influencer on TikTok Live is trusted, knowledgeable, and appealing. This research suggests that before making a purchase, Cirebon audiences frequently rely on recommendations from people they regard as trustworthy and knowledgeable. These findings are consistent with earlier studies that found influencer credibility is a key factor in influencing social media platform purchasing behavior.

The Effect of Flash Sales on Purchase Decisions

With a T-statistic of 7.991 and a P-value of 0.000, the study's findings show that flash sale tactics have a favorable and significant impact on purchase decisions. This implies that consumers can be made to feel a sense of urgency by imposing a time limit and providing competitive prices during live streams. These limited-time offers trigger a fear of missing out, which ultimately accelerates the purchasing decision-making process. These findings are supported by previous research highlighting that time-based promotional tactics on social commerce platforms such as TikTok Live are highly effective in instantly increasing sales volume.

Simultaneous Analysis of Influencer Credibility and Flash Sales

This study shows that influencer credibility and flash sales are crucial elements influencing consumer purchasing decisions on TikTok Live. These two factors have a significant impact, explaining 67.7 percent of the variation in purchasing decisions, according to an R-squared value of 0.677. (Putri & Santoso, 2024), who show how influencer credibility and flash sales concurrently have a significant impact on purchasing decisions on social commerce platforms, corroborate these findings. These results demonstrate that enhancing digital marketing tactics supported by reputable influencers and alluring, time-limited deals can successfully maximize consumer choices.

CONCLUSION

Influencer credibility has a positive and significant impact on consumer purchasing decisions on TikTok Shop in Cirebon, according to the analysis's findings and the discussion that followed. This suggests that using people who exhibit knowledge and integrity when delivering marketing messages is successful in boosting consumer confidence to make purchases. Furthermore, it was discovered that flash sale tactics positively and significantly affect consumers' decisions to buy, suggesting that competitive pricing with a brief time frame effectively instills a sense of psychological urgency in consumers. Overall, flash sales have proven to have a stronger impact than influencer credibility in driving final purchasing decisions. Based on these results, it is recommended that businesses continue to optimize flash sales to attract consumers and collaborate with influencers who have a solid reputation to maximize sales volume on live commerce platforms.

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