

THE INFLUENCE OF MICRO INFLUENCERS AND CELEBRITY ENDORSERS ON TOURISTS INTEREST AND INTENTION TO VISIT SOLO SAFARI



Nafiah Az Zahra¹

Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta, Surakarta, Indonesia

b100210258@student.ums.ac.id

Muzakar Isa^{2*}

Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta, Surakarta, Indonesia

muzakar.isa@ums.ac.id*

Abstract

This study investigates the influence of micro-influencers and celebrity endorsers on tourists' interest and intention to visit Solo Safari. Grounded in the theories of persuasion, source credibility, and social influence, the study employs *purposive sampling* to target respondents with prior exposure to influencer content related to tourism, ensuring the relevance and contextual fit of the data. A total of 200 qualified respondents were selected, and data collection took place in Surakarta, Indonesia, from September to December 2024. Out of 234 collected responses, only valid entries were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) via SmartPLS 4. The findings demonstrate that both micro-influencers and celebrity endorsers significantly influence tourist interest and visit intention. Micro-influencers drive engagement through authenticity, relatability, and audience trust, while celebrity endorsers contribute through their popularity and perceived expertise. Tourist interest acts as a mediating factor, bridging influencer impact and behavioral intention. While the sample size is adequate, expanding it in future research would improve representativeness, especially considering demographic factors such as age, gender, and nationality. Though context-specific, these findings may provide useful insights for similar urban tourism destinations, pending further cross-regional validation. Limitations related to PLS-SEM, such as model fit concerns, potential measurement bias, and multicollinearity, were addressed through validity and reliability tests to ensure robustness of the model.

Keywords: Celebrity Endorser, Influencer Marketing, Micro-Influencer, Tourist Interest, Visit Intention

INTRODUCTION

The digital era has revolutionized marketing strategies, prompting businesses to adapt to rapidly evolving consumer behavior. Indonesia, as an archipelagic nation rich in natural beauty, cultural diversity, and marine biodiversity, holds vast tourism potential (Djunarsjah & Putra, 2021; Mustika, Ichsan & Booth, 2020). One emerging destination is Solo, a city in Central Java experiencing notable tourism growth. Among its key attractions is Solo Safari, the largest zoological park in Surakarta, featuring approximately 347 animal species, including 87 endemic and endangered species native to Indonesia (Wicaksono, 2023). As a newly rebranded and revitalized tourist site, Solo Safari primarily attracts local tourists and families, many of whom are digital natives and active social media users. This makes the destination particularly relevant for exploring influencer marketing strategies to engage potential visitors more effectively.

Influencer marketing, especially via social media platforms like Instagram and TikTok, has become a powerful tool in tourism promotion. Influencers, individuals who create content and influence audience behavior are generally classified into micro-influencers (typically 10,000–100,000 followers) and celebrity endorsers (over 100,000 followers or with mainstream fame) (Cahyani, 2023). Each category offers distinct advantages: while celebrity endorsers draw mass attention, micro-influencers often produce higher engagement and foster deeper trust through relatable content (Casais & Camilleri, 2020; Timur & Ratnasari, 2022).

However, there remains a significant research gap in understanding how audiences respond differently to promotional content from micro-influencers versus celebrity endorsers, especially within the tourism context (Rajagukguk & Soebiantoro, 2024). While influencer marketing has been widely adopted, few empirical studies have specifically examined its effectiveness in shaping tourists' interest and visit intentions, particularly to local destinations like Solo Safari (Chen et al., 2024). This gap is amplified by the dynamic nature of digital engagement and the evolving preferences of online audiences.

Therefore, this study aims to analyze and compare the impact of micro-influencers and celebrity endorsers on consumer interest and intention to visit Solo Safari. By focusing on this local attraction, the research seeks to offer actionable insights into how influencer

type affects tourist behavior, especially among domestic travelers. Additionally, the study briefly considers the implications for international marketing strategies, although the primary audience remains local. To achieve this, the research will employ a quantitative method using survey instruments distributed to social media users familiar with Solo Safari-related content. The findings are expected to provide strategic guidance for destination marketers seeking to leverage influencer collaborations effectively.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Theoretical Foundation

This study is grounded in the self-congruity theory, which posits that consumer behavior is significantly influenced by the alignment between an individual's self-concept and a brand's image (Prebensen, Chen, & Uysal, 2018). Self-congruity shapes emotional attachment and behavioral outcomes such as brand loyalty or visit intention. In this study, micro-influencers and celebrity endorsers are viewed as brand representatives whose perceived image either reinforces or clashes with the self-concept of potential visitors. Prior studies (Liu & Zhang, 2020; Yang et al., 2022) indicate that when consumers perceive influencers' personas as congruent with their self-image, it enhances trust and strengthens intentions to engage with the promoted brand or destination. However, few studies have directly tested this alignment in the context of tourism visit behavior, leaving a gap that this research aims to fill.

Influence of Micro-Influencers on Visit Interest

Influencers play a crucial role in brand endorsement, marketing collaborations, and content creation on their platforms, ultimately driving brand promotion (Chen et al., 2024). Social media serves as a primary medium for these marketing efforts, given its extensive reach in modern commerce (Isa, 2023). Micro-influencers, unlike macro-influencers, have a smaller follower base but maintain a higher engagement rate and regional audience focus, primarily earning through non-regular brand partnerships and affiliate links (Isa, Farid Wajdi, et al., 2023). Their followers typically number fewer than 10,000 (Hidayatullah, Farid, & Nur Afifah, 2022). Juliana et al. (2022) argue that visit interest and purchase intention share similar attributes, with purchase interest stemming from customer awareness

and perception of a desired product. Compared to high-profile influencers, micro-influencers generate greater trust and influence over customer purchasing and visiting interests (Cahyani, 2023). Social media marketing elements context, communication, collaboration, and connection positively enhance visit interest (Cahyani, 2023).

H1: Micro-influencers significantly and positively impact customer visit interest to Solo Safari.

Influence of Celebrity Endorsers on Visit Interest

Celebrities are individuals who receive public recognition beyond social media and are leveraged by brands for their extensive followership (Wirapraja et al., 2023). Social media celebrity endorsers, often referred to as celebgrams, buzzers, YouTubers, or vloggers, play a pivotal role in contemporary brand promotions (Novta et al., 2022). During the COVID-19 recovery phase, government initiatives employed celebrity endorsers to revitalize the tourism sector (Isa, Mangifera, et al., 2023). Consumer visit intention reflects an individual's inclination to engage with a specific destination or service (Marwan, 2022). The association between a celebrity's persona and a brand fosters stronger consumer attachment, encouraging visits to endorsed destinations (Marwan, 2022). Prior studies confirm that marketing strategies utilizing celebrity endorsement positively influence purchase intentions (Marwan, 2022). Moreover, celebrity endorsement intensifies visit interest, with increased endorsements directly correlating to heightened consumer attraction (Dewi et al., 2023).

H2: Celebrity endorsers significantly and positively impact customer visit interest to Solo Safari.

Influence of Micro-Influencers on Visit Intention

Visit intention plays a crucial role in tourism development, reflecting an individual's prospective interest in visiting a particular destination. Research analyzing 310 Indonesian tourists following micro-influencers on social media utilized structural equation modeling to confirm that micro-influencers significantly influence visit intention (Cahyani, 2023). The tourism industry benefits from influencer marketing, especially in driving visit intentions (Chaudhary, 2022). Prior studies suggest that micro-influencers positively impact consumer interest and visit intention (Cahyani, 2023). However, Zaharani, Kusumawati, & Aprilianty (2021) argue that visit intention is not directly influenced by micro-influencers'

attractiveness or expertise. Meanwhile, Handayani (2023) posits that influencer categories—micro, macro, and mega influence consumer trust and visit intention. Additionally, influencer marketing enhances both purchase and visit intention (Novitasari, 2022).

H3: Micro-influencers significantly and positively impact customer visit intention to Solo Safari.

Influence of Celebrity Endorsers on Visit Intention

Consumer retention relies not only on prior experiences but also on effective promotional strategies (Isa, 2023). Celebrities, serving as marketing assets, are often employed to enhance brand visibility and consumer engagement (Wijaya, Nyoman, & Suasih, 2020). Marketers integrate celebrity attributes into brand identity to boost consumer appeal and purchase motivation (Schouten, Janssen, & Verspaget, 2020). A celebrity endorser's credibility influences brand reputation and consumer visit intention (Nur Jannah, Riawati Kurnia, & Penta Sitio, 2023). Additionally, No et al. (2023) highlight that celebrities' extensive media coverage and large fan base amplify promotional reach, increasing visit intention to endorsed destinations. According to Nur Jannah et al. (2023), brand image further reinforces consumer purchase intention when a product maintains a strong reputation. Furthermore, Husin et al. (2020) suggest that celebrity endorsements foster higher consumer purchase motivation, emphasizing the persuasive power of admired figures in marketing.

H4: Celebrity endorsers significantly and positively impact customer visit intention to Solo Safari.

Influence of Interest on Visit Intention

As tourism interest in Indonesia rises, the sector continues to expand, supported by digital platforms that provide extensive travel information (Cahyani, 2023). Consumer curiosity correlates with both visit and purchase intention, with visit intentions often assessed using indicators similar to purchase intention metrics (Juliana et al., 2022). Interest denotes a sustained inclination characterized by personal preference and engagement (Aslan et al., 2021). Visit intention reflects an individual's desire to visit a particular destination, shaped by place attachment, positive influence, and motivation, where imagination plays a moderating role (Hosany, Buzova, & Sanz-Blas, 2020). Consumer interest and purchasing likelihood are closely linked, particularly when combined with brand preference and

perceived product value (Al Mamun et al., 2023). The relationship between interest and intention is mediated by perceived usefulness, attitude, and motivation, where tourism interest exerts hierarchical effects on behavioral intentions toward specific travel modes (Geng, Li, & Xue, 2022). Previous studies affirm that interest is a primary determinant of purchase intention, as it reflects consumer motivation toward future acquisitions (Herlambang, Triyonowati, & Prijati, 2023). Furthermore, stimuli fostering interest positively influence consumer decisions, with elements such as design, perceived risk, trust, and social media marketing affecting purchasing behavior (Silitonga & Alim, 2023).

H5: Interest significantly and positively impacts customer visit intention to Solo Safari.

RESEARCH METHOD

Population and Sample

The objects of this study include Micro Influence and Celebrity Endorser as independent variables, with Interest and Visit Intention serving as dependent variables. The study targets individuals who have shown prior purchase behavior or an active interest in visiting Solo Safari, ensuring that participants possess relevant insights into the phenomena being studied. The sampling technique used is purposive sampling, a non-probability method wherein respondents are selected based on predefined characteristics. While purposive sampling is suitable for targeting specific groups (e.g., prospective visitors to Solo Safari), it may introduce selection bias, as the researcher exercises judgment in respondent selection. This can reduce the generalizability of the findings since the sample may not fully represent the broader population (Qiu, Chen, & Lee, 2021). Therefore, while the method enhances focus on relevant subjects, its inherent limitations are acknowledged.

Given that the population is theoretically infinite, Cochran's formula is employed to determine the sample size needed for sufficient statistical power. With a 95% confidence level, a population proportion of 0.5, and a 6.93% margin of error—a balance between feasibility and precision the resulting minimum sample size is 200 respondents. This error margin reflects an acceptable trade-off between accuracy and practical constraints such as time and accessibility. Although the planned sample size was 200, a total of 234 valid

responses were ultimately collected. This increase improves the study's robustness and slightly enhances generalizability, even within the bounds of purposive sampling. The context for using Cochran's formula aligns with previous social media research methodologies involving Instagram user behavior (Esmaeilzadeh et al., 2021).

Measurement Scale

The measurement constructs used in this study are adapted from validated instruments in prior research, with adjustments in wording to suit the Solo Safari tourism context. A five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*highly inaccurate*) to 5 (*highly accurate*) is employed to capture respondent perceptions (Sun & Wang, 2020). The Micro Influence construct is measured through indicators such as reach, engagement, and content quality focusing on exposure to influencer content and its resonance. The Celebrity Endorser variable includes trustworthiness, expertise, attractiveness, and respect, reflecting how public figures shape perceptions of the destination. The Interest variable encompasses motivational drive, cultural appeal, relational factors, and sensory attraction. Visit Intention is evaluated through content perception, information quality, service evaluation, and desire level addressing how marketing efforts convert to behavioral intentions.

Measurement Procedure

To ensure construct validity, a two-step validation process is applied using SmartPLS version 4. The study employs Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM), which is well-suited for exploratory and complex model testing involving latent variables. Both the outer model (for evaluating indicator reliability, convergent and discriminant validity) and the inner model (for testing path coefficients and model fit) are assessed (Nur Achmad, SE, M.Si, MCE, 2023). In addition to model fit indices such as SRMR and NFI, internal consistency reliability (using Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability) and factor loadings are examined. A pilot test was conducted with a subset of respondents prior to the main data collection to ensure that measurement items were clearly understood and appropriately reflected the targeted constructs.

Data Collection

Primary data collection was conducted using structured online questionnaires disseminated to consumers residing in Surakarta, Indonesia, from September to December

2024. The questionnaire was designed to ensure clarity and alignment with research objectives. Despite initially targeting 200 respondents based on Cochran's formula, 234 complete and valid responses were ultimately gathered, strengthening the dataset. While a questionnaire is effective for gathering quantitative insights, it may not fully capture the nuances of subjective experiences. Thus, future studies could benefit from complementing survey data with qualitative methods such as interviews or open-ended questions—to gain richer understanding of the psychological and emotional dimensions of social media influence on tourism decision-making.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Respondent Data Description

The demographic profile of respondents revealed that the majority were female (59%) and within the 20–25 age group (48.7%). Most held high school or bachelor's degrees, and nearly half were students (48.3%), followed by private-sector employees. Income distribution showed that 36.8% earned above Rp3,500,000 monthly. Regarding digital behavior, 42.7% frequently engaged with content from influencers or celebrities.

These demographic factors potentially shape responses to influencer marketing. Younger audiences (20–25) and students who dominated the sample are typically more digitally connected and receptive to online trends and personalities. This may amplify the persuasive power of influencers, explaining the strong path coefficients observed in the model. Conversely, older or higher-income respondents may rely more on direct experience or peer influence rather than celebrity cues.

Table 1.
Respondents' Demographic Data

Demographic Variables Type	Percentage	Frequency
Gender		
Male	41%	96
Female	59%	138
Age		
Under 20 years	17.1%	40
20 – 25 years	48.7%	114
25 – 30 years	26.5%	62

Above 30 years	7.7%	18
Last Education		
High School/Vocational High School	44%	103
D1/D2/D3 (diploma)	8.1%	19
S1 (bachelor's degree)	40.6%	95
S2 (master's degree)	6.4%	15
S3 (doctorate)	0,2%	2
Occupation		
Student	48.3%	113
Private Employee	19.7%	46
Civil Servant	17.1%	40
Entrepreneur	12.4%	29
Other	2.6%	6
Monthly Income		
<Rp. 1,000,000	16.2%	38
Rp. 1,000,000 – Rp. 2,500,000	26.1%	61
Rp. 2,500,000 – Rp. 3,500,000	20.9%	49
>Rp. 3,500,000	36.8%	86
How often do you follow social media content from influencers or celebrities?		
Very often	15%	35
Often	42.7%	100
Sometimes	35.5%	83
Rarely	6.8%	16
Never		
How many times have you visited a solo safari in the last 3 months?		
Less than 2 times	32.1%	75
2 – 3 times	35%	82
3 – 5 times	17.9%	42
More than 5 times	15%	35

Source: Data Processing, 2025

Data Analysis

Outer Model Evaluation

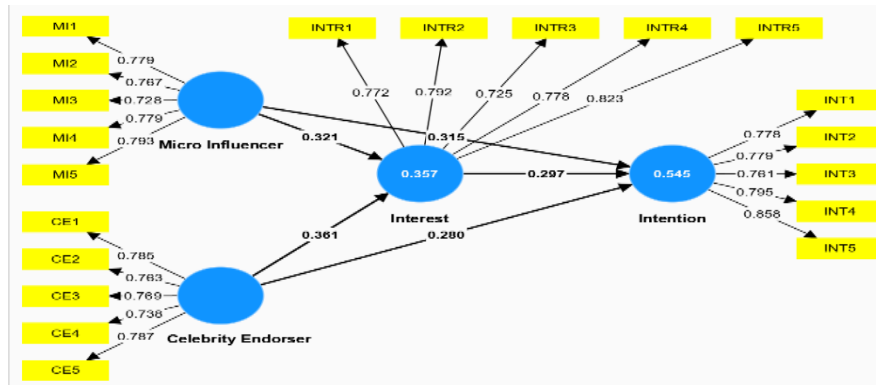


Figure 1.

Outer Model Evaluation Results

Evaluation of this model was carried out using validity tests (convergent validity and discriminant validity), reliability tests (Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability), and multicollinearity tests.

Validity Test

Convergence Validity Test

Table 2.
Convergence Validity Test Result

	Celebrity Endorser	Intention	Interest	Micro Influencer
CE1	0.785			
CE2	0.763			
CE3	0.769			
CE4	0.738			
CE5	0.787			
INT1		0.778		
INT2		0.779		
INT3		0.761		
INT4		0.795		
INT5		0.858		
INTR1			0.772	
INTR2			0.792	
INTR3			0.725	
INTR4			0.778	
INTR5			0.823	

MI1	0.779
MI2	0.767
M3	0.728
M4	0.779
M5	0.793

Source: Data Processing, 2025

Based on the test results presented in the table above, each indicator of the variable demonstrates an outer loading value exceeding 0.7. Consequently, it can be inferred that the measurement instrument employed in this study possesses a high degree of validity.

Discriminant Validity Test

Table 3.
HTMT Test

	Celebrity Endorser	Intention	Interest
Celebrity Endorser			
Intention	0.717		
Interest	0.633	0.711	
Micro Influencer	0.642	0.725	0.611

Source: Data Processing, 2025

Based on the test results presented in the table above, all HTMT values are below 0.90. Consequently, it can be inferred that each research variable adheres to the discriminant validity criteria, confirming its validity.

Reliability Test

Table 4.
Reliability Test

	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability (rho_a)	Composite Reliability (rho_c)	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Celebrity Endorser	0.827	0.829	0.878	0.591
Intention	0.854	0.880	0.896	0.632
Interest	0.837	0.842	0.885	0.606
Micro Influencer	0.828	0.833	0.879	0.592

Source: Data Processing, 2025

Based on the test results in the table above, each variable exhibits a Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability exceeding 0.7. Specifically, the detailed Cronbach's Alpha values indicate that the Celebrity Endorser variable scores 0.827, Intention reaches 0.854, Interest

attains 0.837, and Micro Influencer achieves 0.828. Consequently, it can be inferred that all variables in this study demonstrate a high degree of reliability.

Multicollinearity Test

Table 5.
VIF (Variance Inflation Factor)

	Intention	Interest
Celebrity Endorser	1.603	1.401
Micro Influencer	1.561	1.401
Interest	1.555	

Source: Data Processing, 2025

Based on the test results presented in the table, the correlation values among the variables indicate that the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) is below 5, with specific values of 1.603 for Celebrity Endorser, 1.561 for Micro Influencer, 1.555 for Interest, and 1.401 for Intention. These findings confirm that the regression model employed in this study is devoid of multicollinearity, ensuring its robustness in statistical analysis.

Structural Model Evaluation of Inner Model

Coefficient of Determination (R²)

Table 6.
R-Square Value

	R-square	R-square adjusted
Intention	0.545	0.539
Interest	0.357	0.351

Source: Data Processing, 2025

The determination coefficient (R²) analysis indicates that the research model explains a portion of the variability in the dependent variables examined. Specifically, for the Intention variable, 54.5% of its variance is accounted for by the independent variables within the model, while the remaining 45.5% is attributed to external influences beyond the scope of this study. The adjusted R-square value of 53.9% suggests that the model retains substantial robustness even after accounting for the number of predictor variables. Conversely, the Interest variable exhibits a lower explanatory power, with only 35.7% of its variability elucidated by the model, leaving 64.3% susceptible to unexamined determinants. The adjusted R-square of 35.1% implies that, despite the correction, the model sustains a reasonable predictive capacity, albeit weaker than that of Intention. Overall, these findings

imply that the model demonstrates a moderate predictive capability, particularly in explaining Intention, whereas Interest remains considerably influenced by external factors unincorporated within this framework.

Hypothesis Testing

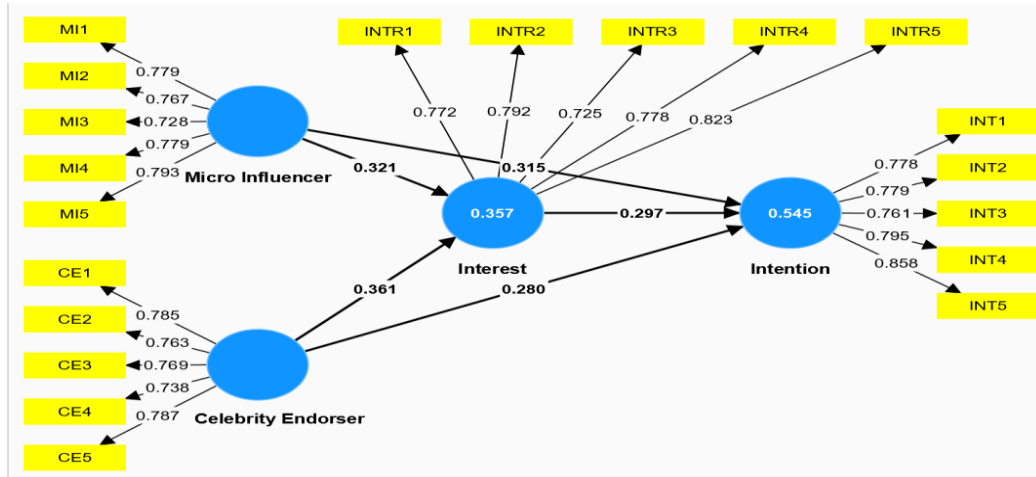


Figure 2
Inner Model

Path Coefficient Test

Table 7.
Path Coefficient Test Result

	Original Sample (0)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T statistic (0/STDEV)	P values
Celebrity Endorser -> Intention	0.280	0.279	0.098	2.843	0.004
Celebrity Endorser -> Interest	0.361	0.362	0.093	2.863	0.000
Interest -> Intention	0.297	0.298	0.089	3.340	0.001
Micro Influencer -> Intention	0.315	0.316	0.097	3.258	0.001
Micro Influencer -> Interest	0.321	0.323	0.094	3.418	0.001

Source: Data Processing, 2025

The path coefficient analysis results indicate that Celebrity Endorser significantly influences Intention, with a coefficient of 0.280, a t-statistic of 2.843, and a p-value of 0.004,

signifying that employing celebrity figures contributes positively to an individual's propensity to take specific actions, such as making purchasing decisions or engaging with a brand. Furthermore, Celebrity Endorser also exerts a notable impact on Interest, with a coefficient of 0.361, a t-statistic of 3.863, and a p-value of 0.000, highlighting that leveraging well-known personalities enhances audience curiosity and engagement with promoted products or services. Additionally, Interest significantly affects Intention, as reflected by a coefficient of 0.297, a t-statistic of 3.340, and a p-value of 0.001, indicating that heightened engagement with a product correlates with a stronger inclination to act, such as purchasing or experimenting with it. Similarly, Micro Influencer demonstrates a substantial effect on Intention, with a coefficient of 0.315, a t-statistic of 3.258, and a p-value of 0.001, reaffirming that influencers with a closer connection to their audience can effectively enhance their followers' motivation to take action. Moreover, Micro Influencer positively influences Interest, as evidenced by a coefficient of 0.321, a t-statistic of 3.418, and a p-value of 0.001, implying that increased interactions from these influencers foster greater audience enthusiasm toward the promoted offerings. Overall, the findings underscore that both celebrity endorsers and micro-influencers serve as crucial catalysts in shaping consumer interest and intention toward a product or service. Furthermore, Interest functions as a strong mediating variable in amplifying Intention, demonstrating that marketing strategies aimed at cultivating audience engagement are more effective in driving desired consumer actions.

Influence of Celebrity Endorsers on Purchase Intention

Celebrity endorsers have a significant influence on consumers' purchase intention, as shown by a coefficient of 0.280, a t-statistic of 2.843, and a p-value of 0.004. This finding aligns with Sari and Yasa (2020), who emphasize that celebrities with high appeal, credibility, and recognition can enhance consumer perceptions and willingness to purchase endorsed products. In the tourism context, a study by Hapsari and Wahyuni (2021) on celebrity endorsements in destination marketing also revealed similar outcomes, where celebrity presence increased trust and destination appeal. This suggests that the persuasive power of celebrities extends beyond general product marketing into experience-based sectors such as tourism, including visits to family recreation sites like Solo Safari.

Influence of Celebrity Endorsers on Consumer Interest

Celebrity endorsers significantly raise consumer interest, indicated by a coefficient of 0.361, t-statistic of 3.863, and p-value of 0.000. This resonates with Yusra (2021), who found that attractiveness and credibility drive attention and curiosity. In a tourism-related context, Qasem and Jaafar (2022) discovered that celebrity travel bloggers and tourism ambassadors can ignite strong interest and online engagement, particularly when their image aligns with the destination's identity. Thus, the alignment between the celebrity's persona and Solo Safari's brand could be key to cultivating interest, supporting the integration of well-matched figures in promotional strategies.

Correlation Between Interest and Purchase Intention

The study reveals that consumer interest strongly correlates with purchase intention (coefficient = 0.297; $t = 3.340$; $p = 0.001$), reaffirming that interest serves as a bridge between awareness and action. This is consistent with the framework proposed by Sari and Yasa (2020), who noted that interest acts as a mediating factor between endorsements and actual decisions. In tourism, Setyorini and Marlina (2022) observed that higher engagement and curiosity, sparked by content from influencers or celebrities, lead to stronger visit intentions, particularly when enhanced by visuals and storytelling. This supports the idea that cultivating genuine interest is instrumental in converting passive viewers into active visitors.

Impact of Micro-Influencers on Purchase Intention

Micro-influencers significantly affect purchase intention, demonstrated by a coefficient of 0.315, t-statistic of 3.258, and p-value of 0.001. While their audience is smaller than celebrities, their authenticity fosters deeper trust. Welsa et al. (2023) highlighted that micro-influencers, through personalized content, hold substantial persuasive power over purchasing behavior. Similar findings by Chia and Wang (2020) in the tourism sector show that travel micro-influencers contribute to destination choices, especially among younger demographics who value relatability over fame. For Solo Safari, collaborating with niche influencers who share eco-tourism or family-friendly values could be more effective than using celebrities alone.

Effect of Micro-Influencers on Consumer Interest

Micro-influencers also contribute positively to consumer interest, as reflected by a coefficient of 0.321, t-statistic of 3.418, and p-value of 0.001. Their authentic storytelling, often via casual content and interactive formats, engages followers on a deeper level. Welsa et al. (2023) support this by asserting that influencers can stimulate interest through consistent content that reflects real-life experiences. In line with this, Hassan and Pandey (2022) found that micro-influencers significantly boost interest in eco-tourism destinations by fostering familiarity and emotional connection. This reinforces the idea that Solo Safari can benefit from influencers who are aligned with its values, thereby amplifying genuine interest and subsequent visits.

CONCLUSION

This study investigates the influence of micro-influencers and celebrity endorsers on tourists' interest and intention to visit Solo Safari, revealing that both significantly enhance these outcomes. Micro-influencers engage audiences through authentic and personal content, building trust and credibility that strongly influence visitation intent, while celebrity endorsers leverage their fame to attract broader attention and elevate interest. Tourists' interest, driven by emotional and cognitive engagement with the promotional content, acts as a key predictor of intention by increasing perceived value and relevance of the destination, thereby influencing decision-making. However, the study's findings should be interpreted with caution due to limitations, particularly the demographic homogeneity of respondents, which consisted mainly of students and may reduce generalizability. Future research is encouraged to involve more diverse populations and to explore the effectiveness of other influencer types, such as macro-influencers, as well as additional variables like price sensitivity, seasonality, accessibility, and peer recommendations that may mediate or moderate the relationship between interest and intention.

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