

**THE INFLUENCE OF ONLINE CUSTOMER REVIEW AND SOCIAL MEDIA
INFLUENCER ON PURCHASE DECISIONS HMNS LOCAL PERFUME FOR
GENERATION Z TIKTOK USERS IN SURABAYA**

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Abstract

This research investigates how Online Customer Reviews and Social Media Influencers influence the purchase decisions of Generation Z TikTok users in Surabaya regarding HMNS local perfume. Employing a quantitative method, data was gathered through online questionnaires distributed to 96 participants chosen using a purposive sampling technique. Data analysis was conducted using the Partial Least Square (PLS) method. The findings reveal that: (1) Online Customer Reviews significantly and positively impact the purchase decisions of Generation Z users; and (2) Social Media Influencers also exert a significant and positive influence on their decisions to buy HMNS local perfume in Surabaya.

Keywords: Generation Z, Purchase Decisions, Online Customer Review, Social Media Influencer

INTRODUCTION

The local perfume industry sector in Indonesia is showing significant growth, in line with the increasing enthusiasm of local consumers for aromatherapy products. Based on information published by Statista Research Department in 2022, there was an increase in revenue starting from the 2020 period, which indicates the great interest of the Indonesian people in domestically produced perfumes. Data from Markethac.id (2024) shows that HMNS is ranked fourth in the Top 9 Hottest Brands in e-commerce with a GMV of IDR 19.6 billion. Therefore, HMNS was chosen as the object of research. There are several positive reviews related to HMNS products. These reviews provide additional information for potential buyers, helping them evaluate the advantages and reliability of the product before making a purchase.

Some influencers market HMNS through TikTok videos that can make consumers aware of HMNS products and have the desire to buy. Consumers who buy perfume products without trying them first but only based on the reviews and recommendations of others are the intention of blind buying (Dalila, 2024). In addition to online customer reviews, social media influencers significantly contribute to influencing consumer buying preferences. Social media influencers are individuals who have special abilities in the digital realm, have a strong influence to drive people's buying interest (Waluyo & Trishananto, 2022). There are still research gaps related to the effect of Online Customer Reviews and Social Media Influencers on the TikTok platform in influencing local perfume purchase decisions, especially at HMNS.

Based on this, this research is intended to close the research gap by exploring how these two elements build buyers' views and trust in the HMNS brand. Finding these phenomena and problems, researchers aim to explain them further by conducting preliminary research through the distribution of temporary questionnaires to 35 participants who use HMNS perfume products. Below is a pre-survey table that presents consumer insights on how Online Customer Reviews and Social Media Influencers affect their purchase decisions.

Table 1
Pre-survey on HMNS perfume consumers

No	Questions	Answers	
		Yes	No
1	Do you ever buy HMNS perfume without smelling it first (blind buy)?	27 person (77,1%)	8 person (22,9%)
2	Do you buy HMNS perfume after seeing online customer reviews on TikTok without smelling it first?	27 person (77,1%)	8 person (22,9%)
3	Do you buy HMNS perfume after seeing a recommendation from a Social Media Influencer on TikTok without smelling it first?	27 orang (77,1%)	8 orang (22,9%)

Source: Processed by researchers, 2025

A result of pre-survey of 35 Generation Z respondents in Surabaya showed that 77.1% had bought HMNS perfume without smelling the scent first (blind buy). This decision was influenced by the popularity of the product on TikTok Shop and positive reviews regarding its scent and durability. As many as 77.1% of respondents stated that reviews about the unique aroma and durability of HMNS perfume convinced them to buy without trying it.

As well as in the aspect of Social Media Influencers, 77.1% of respondents believe in the credibility of Social Media Influencers who often review perfumes, while the other 22.9% still choose to smell directly before buying because they trust personal experience more than social media influencers' recommendations. This phenomenon shows that both variables on TikTok support the blind buy trend of HMNS perfumes, along with increasing consumer trust in digital recommendations.

Although various studies have discussed the role of online reviews and influencers in digital marketing, there are still few studies that specifically examine how these two factors influence the purchase decision of local perfumes on TikTok. Therefore, this study is designed to help bridge the existing research gap by making HMNS perfume products the main focus of the analysis.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Online Customer Review

Online Customer Review (OCR) is a form of communication between consumers online that is included in Electronic Word of Mouth (eWOM), where consumers convey their experiences, assessments of product quality, and seller services through digital reviews (Kamal et al., 2023). These reviews usually contain information about the advantages and disadvantages of the product and serve as a means of exchanging views and personal experiences of consumers that can influence purchase decisions (Dewi et al., 2024). According to Kamal et al. (2023), OCR is measured through five main indicators, namely perceived usefulness, source credibility, argument quality, valence, and volume of reviews.

Social Media Influencer

Social media influencers are individuals who achieve popularity through social media by sharing aspects of their lives with followers, thus becoming known as micro-celebrities (Mahendri & Lutfi, 2022). They have a large number of followers and are able to shape public opinion through the digital content they create (Herviani et al., 2020). In the context of marketing, influencers act as a third party that bridges the relationship between brands and consumers through authentic interactions and builds trust (Kotler et al., 2024). The measurement of social media influencers is done through three main indicators, namely attractiveness, expertise, and trustworthiness (Hanum & Ruspitasari, 2024).

Purchase Decisions

Purchase decisions are consumer actions in determining whether to buy a product or not. According to Pransiska & Sari (2024), purchase decisions can be interpreted as choosing one option from several available alternatives. Thus, purchase decisions involve careful evaluation and thinking so that the choices made can meet the needs and desires of consumers. Measurement of purchase decisions can be made through four main indicators, namely buying stability, preferred brands, as desired, and recommendations from others (Rahmayanti & Dermawan, 2023).

The Influence of Online Customer Reviews on Purchase Decisions

Online customer reviews are an important element in the purchase decision-making process because consumers tend to rely on other users' experiences to assess product quality and credibility (Nugraha et al., 2021). Positive reviews can build trust and encourage purchase decisions, while negative reviews can reduce purchase interest and encourage alternative searches (Kamal et al., 2023). Findings from various studies, such as Kristina and

Aminah (2023), Rahmayanti and Dermawan (2023), and Syamsya and Purwanto (2023), consistently show that online customer reviews have a significant effect on consumer purchase decisions.

H1 : Online Customer Review has a positive effect on Purchase Decisions

The Influence of Social Media Influencer on Purchase Decisions

Social media influencers play a crucial role in shaping consumer purchase decisions through reviews delivered on social media. Influencers who present authentic, informative and relevant content are able to build audience trust, thus encouraging confidence in buying products. Several studies, such as Sugiarto Maulana et al. (2021), Rahmawaty (2024), and Hanum and Ruspitasari (2024), show that social media influencers have a positive and significant influence on purchase decisions, reinforcing their strategic role in influencing consumer perceptions and preferences.

H2 : Social Media Influencers have a positive effect on Purchase Decisions

RESEARCH METHOD

In this research, information collection is carried out by using Google Form. This survey uses objective quantitative methods to objectively and systematically assess how online customer reviews and social media influencers affect HMNS perfume purchase decisions. The sampling technique we used was Non-Probability Sampling, with a special focus on the Purposive Sampling method, which is a sample selection technique based on specific criteria that are considered in accordance with the research objectives (Tjahyadi et al., 2024). The respondents are Generation Z in Surabaya City who meet the criteria, namely actively using TikTok, have seen online reviews and influencer content about HMNS local perfume, and have purchased the product.

The research is using Partial Least Square (PLS) method as the data analyzer tool, which is one of the methods in variant-based Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) utilized to evaluate the correlation of independent and dependent values (Lestari, 2024). The sample selection was 96 participants based on the sample calculation according to Tjahyadi et al. (2024), namely by multiplying the number of indicators with a range of 5-10. Based on these calculations, the researchers required a total of 96 participants as their sample size. This research began in December 2024 to May 2025. Secondary data needed to support this research comes from various sources, such as books, journals, and scientific articles to support research data analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

According to the outcome of the study on the outer model, to determine the measurement model and indicator validity. The outer loading value in the range of 0.5 to 0.6 is still considered feasible if the number of indicators on the latent variable is relatively small, which is between 3 to 7 indicators (Lestari, 2024). Convergent validity is used to ensure that each indicator applied in evaluating a variable has a strong level of relationship with the others. This validity measurement is usually done by observing the outer loading value on each indicator.

Table 2
Outer Loading

	Online Customer Review (X1)	Social Media Influencer (X2)	Purchase Decisions (Y)
X1.1	0,844		
X1.2	0,816		
X1.3	0,853		
X1.4	0,901		
X1.5	0,850		
X2.1		0,913	
X2.2		0,899	
X2.3		0,886	
Y1.1			0,813
Y1.2			0,882
Y1.3			0,847
Y1.4			0,864

Source: Processed by researchers, 2025

The findings of the table show that each indicator for this study has an outer loading score > 0.7. This figure shows that each indicator applied is valid and can optimally represent the evaluated variables, namely online customer review, social media influencer, and purchase decisions. Furthermore, discriminant validity is used to ensure that each variable used in the study is different from one another. Discriminant validity is assessed by examining the cross loading and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values. Cross loading is considered acceptable when the value for a latent variable is greater than that for another variable (Lestari, 2024).

Table 3
Cross Loading

	Online Customer Review (X1)	Social Media Influencer (X2)	Purchase Decisions (Y)
X1.1	0,844	-0,027	0,517
X1.2	0,816	-0,093	0,513
X1.3	0,853	-0,118	0,456
X1.4	0,901	-0,033	0,637
X1.5	0,850	-0,117	0,511
X2.1	-0,128	0,913	0,511
X2.2	-0,156	0,899	0,437
X2.3	0,026	0,886	0,569
Y1.1	0,502	0,449	0,813
Y1.2	0,548	0,545	0,882
Y1.3	0,511	0,489	0,847
Y1.4	0,563	0,450	0,864

Source: Processed by researchers, 2025

The value for cross loading above, can show that each of the loading factors value on the indicators for the online customer review variable, social media influencers, and factor loadings for purchase decisions outweigh other variables. This indicates that every indicator in the research satisfies the requirements for discriminant validity, so their validity can be considered good.

Table 4
Average Variance Extracted (AVE)

	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
<i>Online Customer Review (X1)</i>	0,728
<i>Social Media Influencer (X2)</i>	0,809
Purchase Decisions (Y)	0,725

Source: Processed by researchers, 2025

The AVE values presented indicate that all variables in this study fulfill the convergent validity threshold of greater than 0.5, with online customer review at 0.728, social media influencers at 0.809, and purchase decision at 0.725. This proves that each indicator on the research variable is able to describe its construct well and has met convergent validity.

Table 5
Construct Reliability dan Validity

	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
<i>Online Customer Review (X1)</i>	0,907	0,916	0,930	0,728
<i>Social Media Influencer (X2)</i>	0,883	0,894	0,927	0,809
Purchase Decisions (Y)	0,874	0,877	0,914	0,725

Source: Processed by researchers, 2025

Based on the table results, each variable in this research shows a Composite Reliability value of 0.7 or higher, with online customer reviews of 0.930, social media influencers of 0.927, and purchase decisions of 0.914. This value proves that the three variables have met the reliability standards, meaning that the indicators used are consistent and reliable for measuring each variable. The PLS output path diagram was obtained:

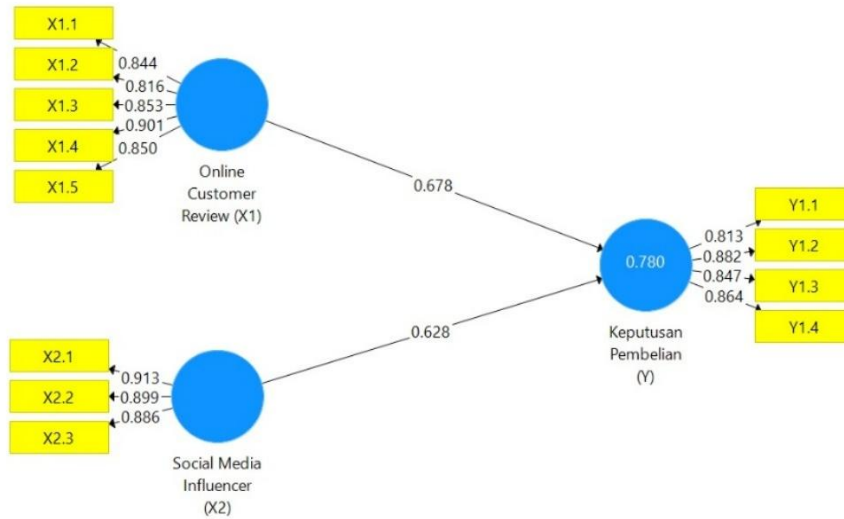


Figure 2
Path Diagram of PLS Output Results

Source: Processed by researchers, 2025

The output of PLS shows the loading factor value for each indicator, this is shown by the value displayed on the arrow linking the independent variable to the dependent variable. In addition, in the circle representing the dependent variable, namely the purchase decision, the R-Square value is also visible, which shows how much impact the independent variables have on this variable. Furthermore, inner model testing is carried out by paying attention to the R-Square value which acts as an indicator to evaluate the overall model feasibility.

Table 6
R-Square

	R Square
Purchase Decisions (Y)	0,780

Source: Processed by researchers, 2025

The R-Square value for the Purchase decisions variable (Y) is recorded at 0.780, which indicates that 78% of its variation is explained by Online Customer Review (X1) and Social Media Influencer (X2), while 22% is influenced by other factors outside the model. This value is classified as strong and indicates the model has good predictive ability. Furthermore, this study tested the hypothesis by analyzing the coefficient values and T-statistics shown in the inner model framework.

Table 7
Path Coefficients (Mean, STDEV, T-Value, P-Value)

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T-Statistic (O/STDEV)	P Values
Online Customer Review (X1) -> Purchase Decisions (Y)	0,678	0,676	0,048	14,187	0,000
Social Media Influencer (X2) -> Purchase Decisions (Y)	0,628	0,626	0,055	11,489	0,000

Source: Processed by researchers, 2025

The results presented in the path coefficients table conclude that hypothesis testing results in the following statement:

- H1: Online Customer Reviews are proven to significantly and positively influence the purchase decisions of Generation Z TikTok users in Surabaya for HMNS local perfume products. This is supported by a path coefficient of 0.678, a T-Statistic of 14.187 (> 1.96), and a P-Value of 0.000 (< 0.05), which confirms a strong causal relationship. That is, the more positive and convincing responses customers receive from TikTok users, the more likely they are to make a decision to buy HMNS local perfume.
- H2: Social Media Influencers are proved to have a significantly and positively influence the purchase decisions of Generation Z TikTok users in Surabaya towards HMNS local perfume products. This is evidenced by a path coefficient of 0.628, a T-Statistic of 11.489 (> 1.96), and a P-Value of 0.000 (< 0.05), which confirms the existence of a causal relationship between variables. This suggests that the more credible, interesting, and convincing an influencer is in conveying product information, the greater the impetus for Generation Z consumers to decide to make a purchase.

The Effect of Online Customer Reviews on Purchase decisions

As a result, the research shows that Online Customer Review (X1) has a positive and significantly impact on Purchase decisions (Y), especially on HMNS local perfume among Generation Z Surabaya. Positive and honest reviews, especially related to aroma and long-lasting power, are shown to be effective in driving purchase decisions, even causing the blind buy phenomenon. The Valence indicator has the greatest influence, reflecting the importance of perceived honesty in reviews. The majority of respondents are males aged 22-25, who are active on social media and use TikTok reviews as their main reference, suggesting that reviews from users of the same age are considered relevant and trusted.

The Effect of Social Media Influencers on Purchase decisions

The analysis findings show that Social Media Influencers (X2) have a significantly and favorable influence on Purchase decisions (Y), especially on HMNS local perfume among Generation Z Surabaya. The influencer's credibility and attractiveness, especially through authentic and interesting TikTok content, is shown to increase trust and purchase interest, even encouraging the blind buy phenomenon. The Attractiveness indicator is the dominant factor, showing the importance of the way information is delivered. This finding is

supported by demographic data, where the majority of respondents are males aged 22-25 who actively access visual content and reviews from influencers, reflecting the strong influence of social media in shaping consumer preferences.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research results, it can be concluded that Online Customer Reviews and Social Media Influencers have a role in shaping purchase decisions for HMNS local perfumes for Generation Z TikTok users in Surabaya. Credible and informative online reviews are able to increase consumer trust and confidence, while influencers who deliver content in an interesting, authentic and convincing manner also strengthen purchase decisions. However, this study has limitations because it was only conducted in the Surabaya area and within a certain period of time, so the results may not necessarily be generalized to different regions or times. Therefore, companies are advised to encourage consumers to provide positive and honest reviews on platforms such as TikTok and work with influencers who have appeal and expertise in perfume and lifestyle. For future research, it is recommended to explore more aspects of influencer characteristics and online review quality, as well as consider additional variables such as social proof, parasocial interaction, or FOMO to broaden the understanding of purchase behavior on social media.

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