

**THE INFLUENCE OF ONLINE CUSTOMER REVIEW AND SOCIAL MEDIA
INFLUENCER ON PURCHASE DECISIONS FOR SKIN1004 SERUM AMPOULE
PRODUCTS FOR GENERATION Z TIKTOK USERS IN SURABAYA CITY**



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Abstract

Indonesia's skincare industry is growing rapidly as awareness of healthy skin increases. Generation Z, as the main market, is influenced by social media such as TikTok in their consumption patterns. The rise of brand overclaims triggered a crisis of trust, making Gen Z rely more on online reviews and credible influencers. The aim of this research is to analyze the influence of online customer review and social media influencer on purchase decisions of Skin1004 Serum Ampoule by Generation Z TikTok users in Surabaya. Using a quantitative approach, data was collected from 108 participants with purposive sampling technique through an online questionnaire and analyzed with PLS-SEM. These research results show that Online Customer Reviews and Social Media Influencers have had a significantly positive impact on purchase decisions. Influencer credibility and expertise are dominant factors, emphasizing the importance of social validation strategies in the digital era.

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

INTRODUCTION

The skincare industry in Indonesia is currently experiencing rapid growth as public awareness of the importance of skincare increases. Based on data from Statista (2024), the personal care and beauty market revenue in Indonesia is projected to reach US\$9.70 billion by 2025, with an annual growth rate (CAGR) of 4.51% until 2029. Other data shows that the personal care and beauty category has the highest sales value at 51.6% compared to other categories in the FMCG sector such as health and mother and baby needs (Kompas 2024). This increase is also driven by a shift in consumer trends towards the use of simpler yet effective skincare (Jakpat 2024).

One of the consumer groups that has a major role in the growth of the skincare industry is Generation Z. This generation dominates Indonesia's demographics with 74.93 million people or around 27.94% of the total population (Rainer 2023). A survey from Jakpat (2024) shows that 86% of Generation Z considers skincare more important than makeup, and as many as 97% consider skincare as a form of investment. In addition, they are more comfortable traveling without makeup, which shows an increased awareness of natural and sustainable skincare. Generation Z's consumption behavior is also heavily influenced by social media, particularly TikTok. Indonesia tops the global TikTok user count, reaching 157.6 million people and surpassing the United States (Fatika 2024). TikTok is considered the most informative source of information by 32% of Generation Z (Jakpat 2025), making it a strategic platform to deliver promotional and educational content for skincare products.

An interesting situation occurred in early 2024 when a TikTok account called Doctor Detective went viral for exposing various cases of overclaims on skincare products. The content presented laboratory test results showing that some products did not contain the active ingredients as claimed on the packaging (Sriani 2024). This triggered widespread discussion and increased the vigilance of consumers, especially Generation Z, in making purchase decisions. Many comments from TikTok users expressed disappointment because they felt deceived by product claims. Some of them even decided to stop using certain brands after seeing the laboratory test results displayed.

This change in behavior shows the importance of understanding the factors that influence purchase decisions (Hartono & Setyaningrum, 2025). Purchase decisions are an important stage in consumer behavior that is often influenced by the level of trust in a product. This trust is usually supported by information from sources that are considered credible, such as online customer reviews and recommendations from social media influencers (Wardani et al. 2024). Online customer reviews are a form of product evaluation submitted by consumers through digital platforms, and are able to provide additional information that greatly influences the perceptions of potential buyers (Depari & Ginting 2022). Meanwhile, social media influencers have the ability to shape public opinion and purchase decisions through emotional closeness to their followers (Mahendri & Lutfi 2022; Supriyanto, & Sasongko, 2025).

The gap that is currently emerging is the difference between expectations and reality. Consumers are expected to make decisions based on valid and objective information, but in reality, decisions are often formed from viral information that is not necessarily accurate. The Detective Doctor phenomena reinforces the importance of validating information before purchase. However, not many studies have highlighted how consumer reviews and

influencers work in conjunction in shaping purchase decisions amidst a crisis of trust due to overclaim issues.

With this in mind, this research presents a novelty by examining the impact of online customer reviews and social media influencers on purchase decisions for skincare products that have not been highlighted by trust issues, namely Skin1004 Ampoule Serum. This South Korean product is known for its natural and skin-soothing Centella Asiatica content. Based on Kompas data (2024), facial serum is one of the categories with the highest sales increase of 26% by 2024, and Skin1004 is among the top five brands with the largest market share of 3.3%. This product has not been touched by negative issues and remains a consumer choice, this makes it an ideal subject to research how social validation influences purchase decisions. Surabaya was chosen as the research location because it is the second largest city in Indonesia and has a high Generation Z population, which is 24.8% (Yuliasuti 2024). In addition, interest in Skin1004 products in Surabaya is also relatively high, as shown through Google Trends data.

Based on this description, this research seeks to explore and assess the impact of online customer review and social media influencer on consumer buying decisions for Ampoule Serum Skin1004 for Generation Z TikTok users in Surabaya City. The focus of this research is directed at generations who are active on social media, especially TikTok and have a big influence on skincare consumption trends. Through this research, It is expected to offer insights into the extent of influence that consumer reviews have and influencers in shaping purchase decisions, especially for products that have not been touched by overclaim issues such as Skin1004.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Online Customer Review

Online customer review are a key element that can significantly shape a consumer's decisions to make a purchase, because it acts as a source of information that helps potential buyers evaluate products before making transactions. Depari and Ginting (2022) argued that Online customer reviews are considered a form of Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM) which contains consumer opinions, both positive and negative, about a product or service. Meanwhile, Prasetiawati et al. (2023) define online customer review as a review given by consumers after experiencing the benefits of a particular product or service. Based on this definition, online customer reviews can be understood as opinions or evaluations that consumers share digitally based on actual usage experiences, which have the potential to shape perceptions and purchase decisions. To measure this variable, Prasetiawati et al. (2023) identified five main indicators, specifically, these include (1) perceive usefulness, (2) credibility of the source, (3) quality of the arguments, (4) review valence, and (5) the number of reviews.

Social Media Influencer

The social media marketing evolution has given rise to the prominence of social media influencer as influential parties in shaping the opinions and behavior of modern consumers. Social media influencers are defined as individuals who are active on social media, have many followers, and are able to influence audiences through shared content (Putri et al., 2024). They are trusted because they are able to deliver information persuasively and build close relationships with their followers. To measure the influence of social media influencers,

Hanum and Ruspitasari (2024) used three main indicators, namely (1) attractiveness, (2) expertise, and (3) trustworthiness.

Purchase Decisions

Purchase decisions are a form of consumer behavior that represents the concluding step in the decision-making process, when consumers decide to buy a particular product (Winasis et al., 2022). According to Atika et al. (2024), purchase decisions involve the process of choosing from several alternatives based on rational considerations in order to determine the best choice. In general, purchase decisions can be understood as the act of choosing and purchasing a product or service after assessing different available choices. Pransiska et al. (2024) identified four indicators to measure this variable, namely (1) purchase stability, (2) selection of preferred brands, (3) product suitability with desires, and (4) the influence of other people's recommendations.

The Influence of Online Customer Reviews on Purchase Decisions

Online customer review have a huge impact in shaping consumer purchasing choices, because information sourced from previous user experiences is often used as a reference in evaluating products. Reviews that are positive can increase the trust and confidence of potential buyers, while negative reviews tend to reduce purchase interest and encourage consumers to switch to other products (Wulandhari et al., 2024). the more and better quality reviews available, the more likely consumers are to feel confident about making a purchase. Previous research by Prasetiawati et al. (2023) and Syamsya and Purwanto (2023) argued that online customer reviews positively and significantly influence purchase decisions.

H1 : Online Customer Review has a positive influence on purchase decisions.

The Influence of Social Media Influencer on Purchase Decisions

Social media influencers significantly impact consumer buying decisions by sharing reviews and recommendations on their platforms. As trusted figures, they are able to shape perceptions, increase interest, and drive purchase actions (Herviani et al., 2020). The reputation and personal experiences shared by influencers are the main attraction for consumers in evaluating products. The more credible the reviews submitted, the greater the influence on purchase decisions, as evidenced in the study of Herviani et al. (2020) and Pratiwi et al. (2023) this indicates that social media influencers have a meaningful and positive effect on buying decisions.

H2 : Social Media Influencers have a positive influence on purchase decisions

RESEARCH METHOD

This research employs a quantitative causal approach to investigate how online customer reviews and social media influencers affect the purchase decisions of Generation Z consumers in Surabaya City for Skin1004 Serum Ampoule products. Primary data were gathered via an online questionnaire on Google Forms, using a Likert scale and distributed to respondents selected through purposive sampling. The study utilizes quantitative data, with primary data sourced from the questionnaires and secondary data from relevant literature. The sample size was calculated by multiplying the number of indicators by nine, resulting in 108 participants. Data analysis was performed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with the aid of SmartPLS software.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

According to the results of research on the outer model to determine the measurement model and validity of indicators, the results of Convergent reliability is usually measured using outer loading. An outer loading score ranging from 0.5 to 0.6 is considered sufficient if the number of indicators on the latent variable is relatively small, which ranges from 3 to 7 indicators (Syamsa, 2023).

Table 1.
Outer Loading

	Purchase Decisions (Y)	Online Customer Review (X1)	Social Media Influencer (X2)
X1.1		0,843	
X1.2		0,903	
X1.3		0,882	
X1.4		0,874	
X1.5		0,847	
X2.1			0,836
X2.2			0,916
X2.3			0,895
Y1.1	0,858		
Y1.2	0,865		
Y1.3	0,870		
Y1.4	0,873		

Source: Processed by researchers, 2025

The testing outcomes indicate that every indicator in this research has an outer loading value exceeding 0.7. This shows that indicators in the variable online customer review, social media influencer, and purchase decisions are valid and able to represent their respective variables well. Therefore, all indicators are appropriate for continued analysis. Furthermore, discriminant validity analysis is carried out to ensure that each indicator is valid. To test discriminant validity, it can be seen through the cross loading value and Average Variance Extracted (AVE). The indicators used in the study only measure the appropriate variables and do not represent other variables. A cross loading value is deemed valid when the loading factor on the intended latent variable is higher than its loading factors on other latent variables (Syamsa, 2023).

Table 2.
Cross Loading

	Purchase Decisions (Y)	Online Customer Review (X1)	Social Media Influencer (X2)
X1.1	0,616	0,843	0,381
X1.2	0,684	0,903	0,387
X1.3	0,615	0,882	0,298
X1.4	0,592	0,874	0,274
X1.5	0,595	0,847	0,301
X2.1	0,468	0,248	0,836
X2.2	0,623	0,396	0,916
X2.3	0,577	0,343	0,895
Y1.1	0,858	0,586	0,570
Y1.2	0,865	0,569	0,555
Y1.3	0,870	0,668	0,534
Y1.4	0,873	0,649	0,546

Source: Processed by researchers, 2025

Evaluation of the cross loading results presented indicates that each loading factor value of the indicators studied, including the constructs of online customer reviews, social media influencers, and purchase decisions, shows a higher loading factor on the construct that should be compared to the measured values on other constructs. Based on this finding, it can be inferred that all indicators in this research fulfill the criteria for discriminant validity and show the quality of acceptable validity.

Table 3.
Average Variance Extracted (AVE)

	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Purchase Decisions (Y)	0,751
Online Customer Review (X1)	0,757
Social Media Influencer (X2)	0,780

Source: Processed by researchers, 2025

The AVE value for all variables in this research is > 0.5 (purchase decisions 0.751; online customer review 0.757; social media influencer 0.780), so all indicators are declared valid and able to explain their constructs well.

Table 4.
Composite Reliability (Construct Reliability dan Validity)

	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Purchase Decisions (Y)	0,889	0,890	0,923	0,751
Online Customer Review (X1)	0,920	0,922	0,940	0,757

Social Media Influencer (X2)	0,859	0,877	0,914	0,780
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Source: Processed by researchers, 2025

From the results above, all variables have a Composite Reliability value ≥ 0.7 (purchase decisios 0.923; online customer review 0.940; social media influencer 0.914), indicating that the indicators used are consistent and feasible to measure their respective variables. The PLS output path diagram was obtained.

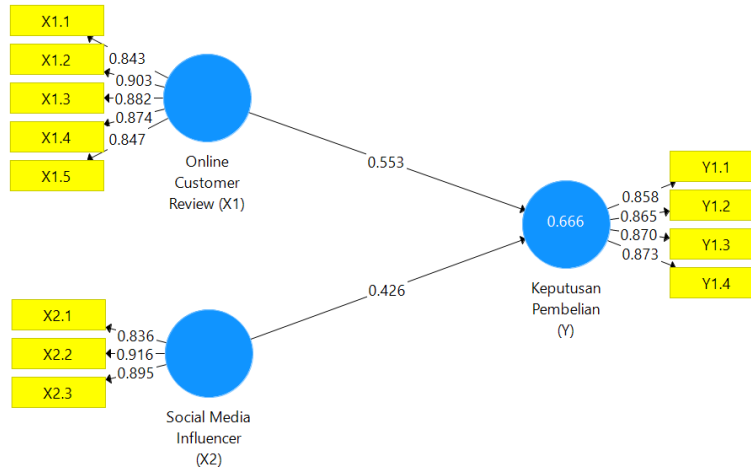


Figure 1.
Path Diagram of PLS Output Results

Source: Processed by researchers, 2025

The PLS output presents the loading factor on the paths connecting variables and the R-Square value within the circle representing the dependent variable (purchase decision), which shows the effect of the independent variables. Furthermore, inner model testing is carried out to assess the structural relationship, the R-Square value serves as an indicator of the extent to which the independent variable accounts for variations in the dependent variable.

Table 5.
R-Square

	R Square
Purchase Decisions (Y)	0,666

Source: Processed by researchers, 2025

The R-Square value for the Purchase Decisions variable is 0.666, indicating that 66.6% of its variation can be explained by Online Customer Reviews and Social Media Influencers, while 33.4% is influenced by other factors. This value shows that the model is able to explain the influence of the two variables well. Hypothesis testing analysis can be identified through evaluating the coefficient values and the amount of T-Statistic contained in the inner model as shown in the following tabulation:

Table 6.
Path Coefficients (Mean, STDEV, T-Value, P-Value)

			Original Sample (O)	T-Statistic (O/STDEV)	P Values	Result
Online Review Purchase (Y)	Customer (X1) ->		0,553	8,574	0,000	Accepted
Social Influencer Purchase (Y)	Media (X2) ->		0,426	5,939	0,000	Accepted

Source: Processed by researchers, 2025

According to the path coefficients analysis, the results show that both research propositions can be confirmed:

H1: Online Customer Review have a significantly and positively on Purchase Decisions for Ampoule Serum Skin1004 products among Generation Z who use the tiktok platform in the Surabaya area, as evidenced by the path coefficient of 0.553, The T-Statistic is 8.574, surpassing the critical value limit of 1.96, while the P-Value is 0.000, which is below the significance level of 0.05.

H2: Social Media Influencer have a significantly and positively on Purchase Decisions for Ampoule Serum Skin1004 products among Generation Z who use the tiktok platform in the Surabaya area, as evidenced by the path coefficient of 0.553, the T-Statistic value of 8.574 which exceeds the critical value of 1.96, and the P-Value of 0.000 which is below the significance level of 0.05.

The Influence of Online Customer Reviews on Purchase Decisions

This research confirms that online customer reviews contribute to driving the purchase decisions of Skin1004 Serum Ampoule products by Generation Z in Surabaya, where credible reviews from previous consumers are proven to increase trust and confidence in the purchasing process. This finding is supported by the highest value on the source credibility indicator, which shows that Generation Z strongly considers who provides reviews, especially for skincare products that require evidence of real and honest experience. In the context of social media overclaims, reviews from real users are considered more believable than direct promotion from brands, thus strengthening the role of reviews as the main reference in making purchase decisions.

The Influence of Social Media Influencers on Purchase Decisions

This research reveals that social media influencers play an important role in influencing Generation Z's purchase decisions for Skin1004 Serum Ampoule products in Surabaya, where the higher the trust in influencers, especially those with expertise and in-depth understanding of the product, the greater the influence in driving purchase decision. This finding is reinforced by the highest contribution to the expertise indicator, which shows that Generation Z is more influenced by influencers who are able to deliver product information in a clear, relevant and scientific manner. Influencers who are considered authentic,

competent and relatable are positioned not just as content creators, but as credible primary sources of information, especially in product categories such as skincare that require knowledge-based considerations and real-life experiences.

CONCLUSION

The study results reveal that Online Customer Reviews and Social Media Influencers significantly and positively influence on purchase decisions for Ampoule Serum Skin1004 products by Generation Z TikTok users in Surabaya. Credible online reviews based on real experiences can increase consumer confidence, while informative and persuasive influencers shape positive perceptions and strengthen buying confidence. Therefore, companies are advised to encourage consumers to make honest reviews through user-generated content, such as rewarded review programs, as well as collaborate with influencers who are experts in the field of beauty and present scientifically educative content. For future research, it is recommended to explore influencer characteristics in more depth, including the use of interactive content such as polls, Q&A, or live streaming, as well as considering variables such as social proof and FOMO that have great potential to influence purchasing behavior on social media.

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