
THE IMPACT OF NEGATIVE ONLINE REVIEWS BY SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCERS ON THE FORMATION OF BRAND LOYALTY TO COSMETIC PRODUCTS

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Abstract

This study investigates how negative electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM) from social media influencers affects brand loyalty in the cosmetics industry. Specifically, it examines the mediating roles of brand attitude and consumer dissatisfaction and the moderating role of influencer credibility. Using a quantitative, associative design, data were gathered from 250 respondents who had been exposed to negative influencer reviews of cosmetic products through purposive sampling. A structured questionnaire was administered, and the data were analyzed with Partial Least Squares–Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) using SmartPLS 4.0. The results reveal that negative influencer reviews significantly weaken brand attitude, which subsequently increases consumer dissatisfaction and reduces brand loyalty. Brand attitude and dissatisfaction significantly mediate the relationship between negative reviews and brand loyalty, indicating that unfavorable influencer content can indirectly drive brand disloyalty through these psychological pathways. However, influencer credibility does not significantly moderate the impact of negative reviews on brand attitude. These findings highlight the critical role of managing e-WOM and monitoring influencer content to protect brand equity. For cosmetic brands, proactive communication strategies and consumer engagement are essential to mitigate the adverse effects of negative influencer reviews. The study contributes to digital marketing literature by integrating mediation and moderation mechanisms into the understanding of how negative e-WOM shapes brand loyalty.

Keywords: Negative Reviews, Influencers, Brand Loyalty, Brand Attitude, Dissatisfaction

INTRODUCTION

The rapid expansion of digital technology has fundamentally transformed consumer behavior, particularly in the cosmetics industry. Social media platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok have become powerful arenas for shaping brand perception, with influencers often serving as key opinion leaders whose credibility and attractiveness drive purchase decisions (Freberg et al., 2011; Ki et al., 2020). While influencer marketing can strengthen brand image and trust (Yudiawati & Ariyanti, 2022), its impact is inherently fragile. Controversies or negative reviews can quickly erode consumer confidence, reduce purchase intentions, and threaten long-term brand equity (Erianti & Athanasius, 2019; Ummah, 2019; Irawati & Akbar, 2024).

Existing research shows that influencer presence alone does not guarantee loyalty. Brand image and product quality exert a more consistent influence on repeat purchases (Rahma et al., 2023), and influencers significantly enhance loyalty only when coupled with positive shopping experiences (Aminah, 2020). Moreover, peer-generated electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM) often carries greater credibility than influencer endorsements, particularly when customers encounter negative experiences (Phuanerys et al., 2024). Although influencers' opinions are especially impactful during early brand exposure, unfavorable reviews can sharply decrease purchase intention and even lead to brand abandonment (Munaf, 2024). In the cosmetics market, where aesthetic appeal and public opinion are critical, negative influencer reviews can swiftly damage consumer trust and impede loyalty formation.

Despite extensive work on the immediate effects of negative e-WOM on purchase intention, limited research explores its long-term consequences for brand loyalty or examines the mechanisms through which brand attitude and consumer dissatisfaction mediate this relationship. This study addresses that gap by investigating the mediating roles of brand attitude and dissatisfaction and the moderating role of influencer credibility in the link between negative influencer reviews and brand loyalty.

Theoretical Contribution. This research extends e-WOM and influencer marketing literature by integrating mediation and moderation perspectives, clarifying how psychological processes translate negative influencer content into brand disloyalty. **Practical Contribution.** Findings provide strategic guidance for cosmetic brand managers to develop proactive digital communication, monitor influencer credibility, and implement rapid, transparent responses to criticism to sustain trust and protect long-term brand equity.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Determinants of Brand Switching in Cosmetics

Brand switching in the cosmetics sector is influenced more by rational considerations such as price sensitivity, trend relevance, and influencer evaluations than by dissatisfaction alone (Widyastuti, 2024; Setiawan & Anwar, 2021). Prior studies suggest that weak emotional bonds, low consumer engagement, and misalignment between brand attributes (e.g., halal certification, packaging aesthetics) and personal identities exacerbate brand disloyalty (Suwandi & Balqiah, 2023).

Influencers play a pivotal role in shaping brand perceptions. Their credibility—anchored in expertise, trustworthiness, attractiveness, and shared values—can amplify both

positive and negative consumer attitudes (Martiningsih, 2022; Nurazizah & Seto, 2025). Conversely, exposure to negative influencer reviews, particularly those perceived as authentic and emotionally charged, can erode brand loyalty if brands fail to respond transparently (Li & Nuangjamnong, 2022; Sudha & Sheena, 2020).

Consumer dissatisfaction stemming from poor product quality, perceived unfair pricing, or unmet expectations remains a critical predictor of brand switching (Wulandari, 2022; Prasetyo & Wibowo, 2023). Moreover, negative attitudes towards a brand often arise from repeated exposure to unfavorable content on social media, which reinforces negative affect and cognitive evaluations (Zaqiah et al., 2022; Fajar et al., 2024).

Recent research further highlights that brand loyalty is increasingly intertwined with ethical alignment and sustainability considerations. Consumers supporting sustainable or socially responsible brands exhibit loyalty not solely based on satisfaction but also on perceived ethical congruence and contribution to broader goals such as the SDGs (Lim et al., 2022).

Critical Synthesis:

While prior literature identifies both rational and emotional determinants of brand switching, studies often examine these factors in isolation. Integrating the influence of negative reviews, influencer credibility, and ethical alignment provides a more holistic understanding of the mechanisms driving cosmetic brand disloyalty. This approach addresses gaps in global literature, particularly in emerging markets where halal compliance and influencer marketing intersect with shifting consumer expectations.

Hypothesis Development

Negative Reviews and Brand Attitudes

Negative reviews from credible social media influencers shape consumers' emotional evaluation of brands, even in the absence of direct product experience. Studies show that highly trusted influencers can significantly worsen brand perceptions, as followers rely on their assessments (Erianti & Athanasius, 2019).

H1: Negative reviews by social media influencers positively and significantly influence negative attitudes towards brands.

Negative Reviews and Brand Dissatisfaction

Exposure to negative reviews can create heightened expectations or skepticism prior to purchase. When product performance fails to meet these expectations, dissatisfaction intensifies (Aminah, 2020). Negative reviews also undermine initial trust, leading to stronger post-purchase dissatisfaction.

H2: Negative reviews by social media influencers positively and significantly influence brand dissatisfaction.

Negative Brand Attitudes and Brand Disloyalty

Consumer attitudes toward a brand are key determinants of loyalty. Negative attitudes, shaped by both experience and external opinions, increase the likelihood of switching and may promote negative word-of-mouth (Aminah, 2020).

H3: Negative brand attitudes positively and significantly influence brand disloyalty.

Brand Dissatisfaction and Brand Disloyalty

Empirical evidence confirms that dissatisfied consumers are more likely to abandon a brand, seek alternatives, and share negative experiences publicly (Ummah, 2019). In competitive markets like cosmetics, dissatisfaction accelerates disloyal behavior.

H4: Brand dissatisfaction positively and significantly influences brand disloyalty.
Influencer Credibility as a Moderator

Credible influencers can amplify the effect of negative reviews on consumer attitudes. Expertise, trustworthiness, and attractiveness intensify the impact of negative content, leading to stronger negative perceptions (Erianti & Athanasius, 2019).

H5: Influencer credibility positively and significantly moderates the relationship between negative reviews and negative brand attitudes.

Brand Attitudes as a Mediator

Brand attitudes mediate the relationship between negative reviews and disloyalty. Reviews alone do not guarantee disloyalty; rather, they shape attitudes that subsequently influence loyalty-related behaviors (Shofi & Kholilurrohman, 2025).

H6: Brand attitudes positively and significantly mediate the relationship between negative reviews and brand disloyalty

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a quantitative research design to investigate the influence of negative influencer reviews on brand disloyalty within the cosmetics sector on digital platforms. Specifically, it examines how brand attitudes and brand dissatisfaction mediate this relationship, while influencer credibility serves as a moderating variable.

Sampling and Participants

Data were collected from social media users who had been exposed to negative influencer content and had experience using cosmetic products. Purposive sampling was applied to ensure respondents met these criteria. A total of 250 respondents were targeted, following the general rule for Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM), which recommends a minimum sample size of 10 times the largest number of structural paths pointing to a latent construct (Hair et al., 2022). This sample size is considered adequate for model stability, although generalizability is limited to social media users within the cosmetics consumer segment rather than the broader population.

Data Collection and Instrumentation

A structured questionnaire was employed, with items measured on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The questionnaire was distributed online via platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and WhatsApp to facilitate access to users actively engaged with cosmetic content. Variables were consistently named across the study as follows:

1. Negative Reviews (NR)
2. Brand Attitudes (BA)
3. Brand Dissatisfaction (BD)
4. Brand Disloyalty (BL)
5. Influencer Credibility (IC)

Data Analysis

Analysis was conducted using SmartPLS, including validation and testing of both measurement and structural models. The study assessed:

1. Convergent and discriminant validity to ensure the accuracy of constructs and indicators.

2. Reliability via composite reliability and Cronbach’s alpha to confirm consistency of measures.
3. Structural analysis to examine the strength and direction of relationships, including mediation and moderation effects.

Additionally, descriptive statistics were used to summarize respondents’ demographic characteristics and their perceptions across the variables.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research Location at a Glance

The study was conducted virtually, targeting respondents from urban areas in Indonesia with high internet access and active social media use, such as Central Java, parts of Kalimantan and Sulawesi, and other large urban areas that are centers of the rapidly growing cosmetics industry. It examines the impact of negative influencer reviews on platforms like TikTok, Instagram, and YouTube on consumer brand loyalty. As engagement with these platforms increases, exposure to promotional and critical content increases, making influencers a key agent in shaping brand perception. Using online data collection, the study captures how Indonesian consumers, especially young people, respond to negative comments and adjust their brand attitudes and loyalty in an influencer-driven digital environment.

Respondent Characteristics

Respondents in the study were selected based on specific criteria: they were active social media users, followed at least one beauty influencer, and had purchased or considered purchasing cosmetic products based on influencer reviews. The characteristics of these respondents were identified through the results of the research conducted.

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics and Respondent Behavior

Group	Subcategories	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Man	56	22.0%
	Woman	194	78.0%
Age	14–20 years	54	22.0%
	21–26 years old	158	63.0%
	27–30 years old	28	11.0%
	30–35 years old	4	2.0%
	36–40 years old	2	1.0%
	40–45 years old	2	1.0%
	45+ years	2	1.0%
Work	Student	153	61.2%
	Businessman	9	3.6%
	Serving Civilians	7	2.8%
	Private Employees	71	28.4%
	Staff of State-Owned Enterprises	3	1.2%
	Content Creator	5	2.0%
	Digital Influencers	2	0.8%
Most Used Social Media	Posted on Instagram	140	56.0%

	TikTok	86	34.4%
	YouTube	5	2.0%
	Posted on Facebook	8	3.2%
	Posted by E	11	4.4%
Most Preferred Cosmetic Brands	Skintific	88	35.2%
	Wardah	57	22.8%
	Scarlett	34	13.6%
	Avoskin	24	9.6%
	Happy 2 Light	13	5.2%
	Kahf	10	4.0%
	Azarin	8	3.2%
	Emina	9	3.6%
	Replace Yourself	5	2.0%
	Mrs. Gie	2	0.8%
Frequency of Cosmetic Use	Daily	151	60.4%
	2–3 times/week	26	10.4%
	Once/week	9	3.6%
	Infrequently	46	18.4%
	Never	18	7.2%

The study surveyed 250 respondents, mostly women (78%) and aged 21-26 (63%), representing a demographic heavily engaged in cosmetics trends. Most are students (61.2%) and active on Instagram (56%) and TikTok (34.4%) for influencer content. Skintific was the top brand influenced by online reviews (35%), followed by Wardah and Scarlett. Notably, 60.4% use cosmetics daily, indicating strong product engagement and brand loyalty potential.

External Model Analysis

Validity Test

Convergent Validity

Table 2. Convergent Validity

Variable	(AVE)	Cut	Note.
Brand Y Disloyalty	0.929	0,5	Legitimate
Z2 Brand Dissatisfaction	0.933	0,5	Legitimate
Influencer M Credibility	0.874	0,5	Legitimate
Negative Attitudes of the Z1 Brand	0.907	0,5	Legitimate
Negative Reviews X	0.913	0,5	Legitimate

Source: Primary Data, processed by SmartPLS 4.0, 2025

Table 2 shows that all variables in this study had AVE (Average Variance Extracted) values exceeding 0.5, indicating that they met the criteria of discriminant validity. Specifically, Brand Disloyalty recorded AVE 0.929, Brand Dissatisfaction 0.933, Influencer Credibility 0.874, Brand Attitude 0.907, and Negative Reviews 0.913, confirming that each construct demonstrates adequate convergent and discriminatory validity.

Loading Factor

Table 3. Loading Factor

Indicators	X	M	Z1	Z2	Y	Cut	Note.
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BD1	0.963			0,5	Legitimate		
BD2	0.962			0,5	Legitimate		
BD3	0.970			0,5	Legitimate		
BD4	0.960			0,5	Legitimate		
KI1		0.929		0,5	Legitimate		
KI2		0.944		0,5	Legitimate		
KI3		0.931		0,5	Legitimate		
KI4		0.935		0,5	Legitimate		
KI5		0.937		0,5	Legitimate		
KM1			0.960	0,5	Legitimate		
KM2			0.765	0,5	Legitimate		
KM3			0.965	0,5	Legitimate		
KM4			0.969	0,5	Legitimate		
KM5			0.970	0,5	Legitimate		
SM1				0.954	0,5	Legitimate	
SM2				0.953	0,5	Legitimate	
SM3				0.948	0,5	Legitimate	
SM4				0.954	0,5	Legitimate	
UN1					0.954	0,5	Legitimate
UN2					0.960	0,5	Legitimate
UN3					0.959	0,5	Legitimate
UN4					0.949	0,5	Legitimate
Credibility					1.000	0,5	Legitimate
M X X Influencer Negative Reviews							

Source: Primary Data, processed by SmartPLS 4.0, 2025

The indicator is considered to meet the criteria for convergent validity if it has an outer loading value greater than 0.7. Based on the test results, all indicators showed an outer loading value above 0.7, indicating that they met the validity criteria and were suitable for further analysis. To provide clarity, the diagram of the exterior model is presented as follows:

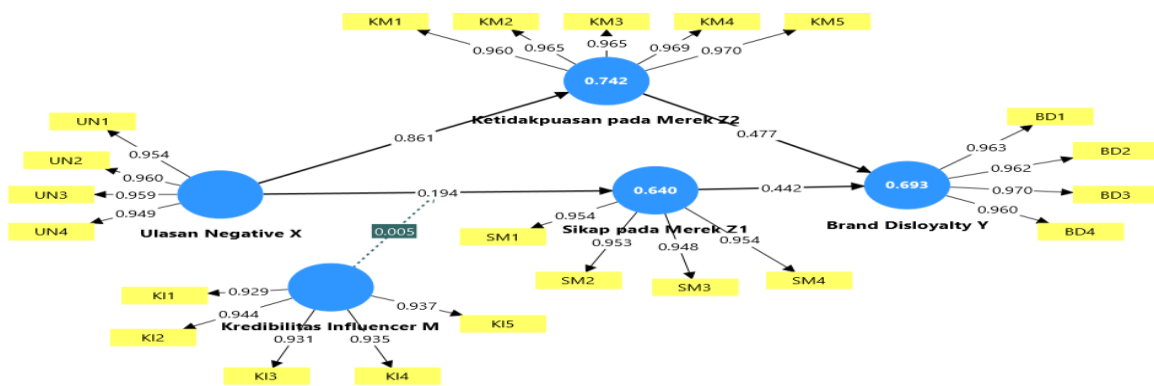


Figure 1. Outdoor Models

Discriminatory Validity

Cross-Loading

Table 4. Cross-Loading

Indicators	Y	M	Z2	Z1	X
BD1	0.963	0.711	0.717	0.720	0.698

BD2	0.962	0.725	0.735	0.738	0.733
BD3	0.970	0.739	0.738	0.719	0.719
BD4	0.960	0.693	0.740	0.704	0.710
KL1	0.708	0.929	0.703	0.756	0.759
KL2	0.723	0.944	0.698	0.762	0.757
KL3	0.697	0.931	0.711	0.728	0.773
KL4	0.673	0.935	0.694	0.740	0.757
KL5	0.676	0.937	0.702	0.715	0.776
KM1	0.730	0.742	0.960	0.623	0.834
KM2	0.739	0.723	0.965	0.613	0.834
KM3	0.743	0.719	0.965	0.609	0.817
KM4	0.720	0.719	0.969	0.616	0.836
KM5	0.740	0.722	0.970	0.629	0.837
SM1	0.704	0.762	0.617	0.954	0.688
SM2	0.729	0.779	0.638	0.953	0.695
SM3	0.715	0.743	0.605	0.948	0.665
SM4	0.698	0.732	0.577	0.954	0.661
UN1	0.707	0.777	0.825	0.673	0.954
UN2	0.708	0.794	0.818	0.690	0.960
UN3	0.707	0.791	0.824	0.682	0.959
UN4	0.714	0.762	0.824	0.674	0.949
Credibility	-0,025	0,036	0,040	0,028	0,006
M X X Influencer					
Negative					
Reviews					

Source: Primary Data, processed by SmartPLS 4.0, 2025

Table 4 shows that the loading value of each indicator on their respective constructs (X, Z1, Z2, M, and Y) is higher than its crossload. This suggests that all latent constructs show good discriminative validity, since the indicators are more strongly related to their own constructions than others. The cross-loading analysis confirms the absence of discriminatory validity issues.

Alpha Cronbach

Table 5. Alpha Cronbach

Variable	Alpha Cronbach	Note:
Brand Y Disloyalty	0.975	Reliable
Z2 Brand Dissatisfaction	0.982	Reliable
Influencer M Credibility	0.964	Reliable
Z1 Brand Attitude	0.966	Reliable
Negative Reviews X	0.968	

Source: Primary Data, processed by SmartPLS 4.0, 2025

Based on Table 5, the Alpha Cronbach values for all variables exceed 0.60, indicating acceptable reliability. Specifically, Brand Disloyalty scored 0.975, Brand Dissatisfaction 0.982, Influencer Credibility 0.964, Brand Negative Attitude 0.966, and Negative Reviews 0.968. These results confirm that each construction in this study meets the reliability criteria.

Composite Reliability

Table 6. Composite Reliability

Variable	Composite Reliability	Commentary
Brand Y Disloyalty	0.981	Reliable
Z2 Brand Dissatisfaction	0.986	Reliable
Influencer M Credibility	0.972	Reliable
Negative Attitudes of the Z1 Brand	0.975	Reliable
Negative Reviews X	0.977	Reliable

Source: Primary Data, processed by SmartPLS 4.0, 2025

Based on Table 6, all variables in the study showed composite reliability values exceeding 0.7, indicating excellent internal consistency. Specifically, Brand Disloyalty scored 0.981, Brand Dissatisfaction 0.986, Influencer Credibility 0.972, Brand Negative Attitude 0.975, and Negative Reviews 0.977. These results confirm that all constructions meet the composite reliability criteria, signifying that each variable exhibits a high level of reliability.

Deep Model Analysis

Pros of Fit

R Square (R²)

Table 7. R Square (R²)

Variable	R Square	R Square Customized
Brand Y Disloyalty	0.693	0.691
Dissatisfaction with the Z1 Brand	0.742	0.740
Negative Attitudes towards the Z2 Brand	0.640	0.637

Source: Primary Data, processed by SmartPLS 4.0, 2025

Based on Table 7, the model shows strong predictive power, with all R² values above 0.60. Brand Dissatisfaction (Z2) has the highest R² at 0.742, indicating that 74.2% of its variance is explained by Negative Reviews (X). Brand Attitude (Z1) follows with R² 0.640, influenced by Negative Reviews and Influencer Credibility (M), with M having a stronger effect. Brand disloyalty (Y) recorded R² 0.693, explained by Z1 and Z2. These results confirm that the model explains most of the variance in all three dependent variables.

Effect Size (F²)

Table 8. Effect Size (F²)

	Y	Z2	M	Z1	X
Brand Y Disloyalty					
Z2 Brand Dissatisfaction	0.438				
Influencer M Credibility			0.368		
Z1 Brand Attitude	0.375				
Negative Reviews X		2.869	0.034		
Influencer Credibility x Negative Reviews X			0.000		

Source: Primary Data, processed by SmartPLS 4.0, 2025

Table 8 shows that the variables with large effect sizes (above 0.35) on Brand Disloyalty were negative reviews, brand dissatisfaction, and attitude towards the brand. In contrast, the effect of influencer credibility on negative reviews is minimal, with an effect size of only 0.00.

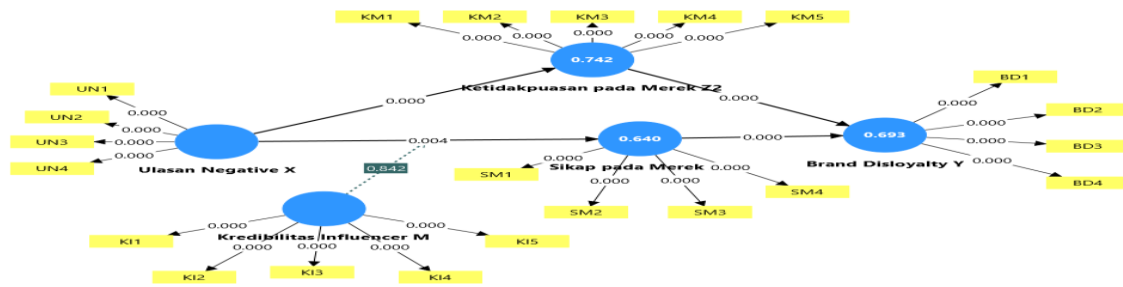


Figure 2 Inner Model

Immediate effects

Table 9. Direct Effects Data

	Original Sample	Statistics T	P value
Dissatisfaction with the Z1 Brand -> Y Brand Disloyalty	0,477	10.859	0,000
Influencer Credibility M -> Negative Attitude to the Z1 Brand	0,634	10.092	0,000
Influencer Credibility M X Negative Reviews X -> Negative Attitude towards Z1 Brand	0,005	0.200	0,842
Negative Attitudes towards the Z1 Brand -> Y Brand Disloyalty	0,442	10.593	0,000
Negative Reviews X -> Dissatisfaction with the Z2 Brand	0,861	52.504	0,000
Negative Reviews X -> Negative Attitudes towards Brand Z1	0,194	2.895	0,045

Source: Primary Data, processed by SmartPLS 4.0, 2025

Based on Table 9, the results show a significant direct effect of brand dissatisfaction on brand disloyalty, influencer credibility on brand attitude, brand negative attitude towards brand disloyalty, and negative reviews on brand dissatisfaction, as evidenced by a positive path coefficient and a p-value of less than 0.05. However, there was no significant mediating effect of influencer credibility between negative reviews and negative brand attitudes, as indicated by a positive path coefficient but a p-value greater than 0.05.

Indirect Effects

Table 10. Indirect Effects Data

	Original Sample	Statistics T	P value
Negative Reviews X -> Negative Attitude Towards The Z1 Brand -> Brand Disloyalty Y	0,086	2,735	0,006
Negative Reviews Influencer Credibility M X -> Negative Attitude Towards Z1 Brand	0,002	0,199	0,842
Negative reviews of X -> dissatisfaction with the Z2 brand -> disloyalty of the Y brand	0,411	10.493	0,000

Source: Primary Data, processed by SmartPLS 4.0, 2025

Based on Table 10, the analysis reveals the significant and insignificant indirect effects of negative online reviews by social media influencers on brand loyalty in cosmetic products. Significant indirect effects ($p < 0.05$) included: negative reviews influencing brand disloyalty through brand attitudes ($p = 0.006$), negative reviews influencing brand disloyalty through brand dissatisfaction ($p = 0.000$), and influencer credibility influencing brand disloyalty through brand dissatisfaction ($p = 0.000$). In contrast, insignificant indirect effects ($p\text{-value} > 0.05$) were found in the path from influencer credibility to negative brand attitudes through negative reviews ($p = 0.842$).

Moderate Regression Analysis

Table 11. Coefficient of Interaction Path

	Original Sample	Statistics T	P value	Meaning
Influencer Credibility x Negative Reviews X -> Negative Attitude Towards Z1 Brand	0.005	0.200	0.842	Insignificant
Negative reviews x -> negative attitude towards the Z1 brand	0.194	2.895	0.004	Important
Influencer Credibility M -> Negative Attitude Towards Z1 Brand	0.634	10.092	0.000	Important

Source: Primary Data, processed by SmartPLS 4.0, 2025

Based on the results, negative reviews significantly affected the negative attitude of the brand ($X \rightarrow Z1$) with a coefficient of 0.194 and a p-value of 0.004. The credibility of influencers also had a significant impact on the brand's negative attitude ($M \rightarrow Z1$), with a coefficient of 0.634 and a p-value of 0.000. However, the interaction between negative reviews and influencer credibility ($X \times M \rightarrow Z1$) was not significant, as shown by a coefficient of 0.005 and a p-value of 0.842.

Hypothesis Testing

Table 12. Hypothesis Testing

	Original Sample	P value	Meaning
Dissatisfaction with the Z2 Brand -> Y Brand Disloyalty	0,477	0,000	Important
Influencer Credibility M X Negative Reviews X -> Negative Attitude towards Z1 Brand	0,005	0,842	Insignificant
Negative Attitudes towards the Z1 Brand -> Y Brand Disloyalty	0,442	0,000	Important
Negative Reviews X -> Dissatisfaction with the Z2 Brand	0,861	0,000	Important
Negative Reviews X -> Negative Attitudes towards Brand Z1	0,194	0,045	Important
Negative Reviews X -> Negative Attitudes towards the Z1 Brand -> Brand Disloyalty to Y	0,086	0,006	Meaning

Source: Primary Data, processed by SmartPLS 4.0, 2025

Bootstrapping analysis via SmartPLS yielded the following results: Negative reviews by social media influencers significantly affected brand attitudes ($\beta = 0.194, p = 0.045$) and brand dissatisfaction ($\beta = 0.861, p = 0.000$), favoring H1 and H2. Brand attitudes and dissatisfaction both significantly increased brand disloyalty ($\beta = 0.442$ and $\beta = 0.477$,

respectively; $p = 0.000$), confirming H3 and H4. However, H5 was rejected, as the influencer's credibility did not significantly mediate the relationship between negative reviews and negative brand attitudes ($\beta = 0.005$, $p = 0.842$). Finally, H6 accepted brand attitudes significantly mediated the effect of negative reviews on brand loyalty ($\beta = 0.086$).

The effect of negative reviews by social media influencers on negative attitudes towards brands

The results show that negative comments from influencers can significantly affect consumers' perception of a brand. While the impact may not be substantial, the impact is strong enough to change consumer judgment. When an influencer shares an unfavorable review of a cosmetic product, followers tend to reassess their opinion, often leading to doubt or even reluctance. These findings are in line with Azkiah (2023), who explains that when influencers deliver criticism in a convincing tone and relatable personal experiences, audiences are emotionally affected and more likely to be persuaded.

The effect of negative reviews by social media influencers on brand dissatisfaction

Consumer disappointment often arises after finding negative information from trusted sources on social media. In this context, influencers play an important role in shaping dissatisfaction. The data show that this relationship is not only clear but also strong—exposure to negative content about a brand substantially increases the likelihood of consumer dissatisfaction. This is supported by Rahma et al. (2023), who found that negative perceptions on social media can spread quickly and influence decisions, especially among consumers who rely heavily on the opinions of others before making a purchase.

The effect of negative attitudes towards brands on brand disloyalty.

Negative brand attitudes significantly impact consumer loyalty, with increased dislikes or unfavorable perceptions often leading to brand rejection or even negative word-of-mouth spread. As supported by Hastari (2022), brand attitudes play an important role in determining whether consumers remain loyal or switch to competitors. In this context, negative reviews not only shape the perception of the product but also intensify the consumer's intention to avoid the brand completely.

The effect of brand dissatisfaction on brand disloyalty

The results of hypothesis testing show that consumer disappointment with a brand does not end in dissatisfaction alone. When expectations are not met, consumers are not only likely to stop buying but can also spread their negative experiences. These findings reveal that the greater the dissatisfaction, the stronger the urge to leave the brand. This is in line with Rita and Irwan (2024), who found that dissatisfaction triggers cognitive dissonance, making consumers consider switching to other brands especially when negative reviews from others reinforce their unfavorable experiences.

The influence of influencer credibility as a mediator in the relationship between negative reviews and negative attitudes towards a brand

Interestingly, when tested to see whether an influencer's credibility could strengthen or weaken the impact of negative reviews on consumer attitudes, the results showed no significant effect. This suggests that *who delivers* the message is less important than *what is*

said. Although, in theory, credible influencers can shape audience perceptions, in this case, the power of review content plays a more decisive role (Yulianti, 2022). Credibility alone is not enough without being supported by other factors such as brand trust or the relevance of shared experiences. Thus, under certain conditions, even well-known influencers cannot resist the influence of highly negative reviews.

The influence of negative attitudes towards brands as mediators in the relationship between negative reviews and brand disloyalty

The analysis reveals that brand negative attitudes play an important mediating role between negative reviews and brand disloyalty. Negative reviews tend to affect perceived quality, which then fosters negative attitudes and leads to increased intention to leave the brand. In this process, attitudes serve as a central conduit that channels the impact of unfavorable reviews on unfaithful behavior. These findings are in line with Hastari (2022), who highlights that negative perceptions emanating from influencer reviews can create emotional detachment from brands, ultimately triggering the decision to discontinue their use.

CONCLUSION

This study examined the impact of negative social media influencer reviews on brand disloyalty in the cosmetics sector, considering brand attitudes and dissatisfaction as mediators and influencer credibility as a moderator. Findings show that negative reviews significantly increase brand dissatisfaction and foster negative brand attitudes, which in turn drive brand disloyalty, while influencer credibility did not significantly moderate the effect. Theoretically, the study enriches e-WOM literature by highlighting the mediating roles of brand attitudes and dissatisfaction and demonstrating the utility of PLS-SEM in modeling digital consumer behavior. Practically, cosmetics brands should actively monitor influencer content, manage social media sentiment, and implement transparent communication strategies to mitigate reputational risks, while ensuring positive brand experiences to counteract negative reviews. Limitations include the use of closed-ended questionnaires, a relatively small sample of 250 respondents, and an exclusive focus on negative reviews, which may restrict generalizability. Future research should expand sample diversity, incorporate qualitative methods, examine both positive and negative influencer content, and explore additional mediators or moderators such as consumer involvement and brand trust to provide deeper insights into brand loyalty dynamics.

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