

THE POWER OF DIGITAL INFLUENCE: HOW SOCIAL MEDIA DRIVES BRAND AWARENESS AND PURCHASE INTENTIONS AMONG GEN Z

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the impact of influencer credibility, user-generated content (UGC), and celebrity endorsement on purchase intention among Generation Z in Jabodetabek, with brand awareness as a mediating variable. This study collected data from 186 respondents who were skincare products users and the data were analyzed by using Partial Least Squares-Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). The results indicate that UGC and brand awareness significantly and positively influence purchase intention. However, influencer credibility and celebrity endorsement do not affect purchase intention significantly. Furthermore, brand awareness does not mediate the impact of influencer credibility and celebrity endorsement on purchase intention. These findings highlight the importance of prioritizing user-generated content and brand awareness in shaping consumer's purchase intention. Moreover, for skincare companies, focusing on authentic user interactions and fostering brand familiarity can enhance marketing strategies, particularly in competitive digital environments. Furthermore, this study offers insights regarding how digital marketing elements influence consumer's behavior and provides feasible recommendations for businesses who target young and media-savvy customers. The results underline the evolving role of digital content and branding in driving purchase intentions, suggesting that companies should adapt their strategies to align with the expectations of Generation Z, who value relatability and authenticity.

Keywords: influencer credibility, user-generated content, celebrity endorsement, brand awareness, purchase intention.

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini mengeksplorasi dampak kredibilitas influencer, konten yang dihasilkan pengguna (User-Generated Content/UGC), dan dukungan selebriti terhadap niat beli di kalangan Generasi Z di Jabodetabek, dengan kesadaran merek sebagai variabel mediasi. Data dikumpulkan dari 186 responden yang merupakan pengguna produk perawatan kulit dan dianalisis menggunakan Partial Least Squares-Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa UGC dan kesadaran merek berpengaruh signifikan dan positif terhadap niat beli. Namun, kredibilitas influencer dan dukungan selebriti tidak berpengaruh signifikan terhadap niat beli. Lebih lanjut, kesadaran merek tidak memediasi pengaruh kredibilitas influencer dan dukungan selebriti terhadap niat beli. Temuan ini menyoroti pentingnya memprioritaskan konten yang dihasilkan pengguna dan kesadaran merek dalam membentuk niat beli konsumen. Selain itu, bagi perusahaan perawatan kulit, berfokus pada interaksi pengguna yang autentik dan membangun familiaritas merek dapat meningkatkan strategi pemasaran, terutama di lingkungan digital yang kompetitif. Lebih jauh, penelitian ini memberikan wawasan mengenai bagaimana elemen pemasaran digital memengaruhi perilaku konsumen serta memberikan rekomendasi yang dapat diterapkan oleh bisnis yang menargetkan pelanggan muda dan melek media. Hasil penelitian ini menegaskan peran yang terus berkembang dari konten digital dan branding dalam mendorong niat beli, menyarankan bahwa perusahaan harus menyesuaikan strategi mereka agar selaras dengan ekspektasi Generasi Z yang menghargai keterkaitan dan keaslian.

Kata kunci: kredibilitas influencer, konten yang dihasilkan pengguna, dukungan selebriti, kesadaran merek, niat beli.

1. Introduction

The beauty industry has experienced rapid growth in recent years, which was driven by increasing awareness of technological advancements and a shift of consumer's lifestyles. Consumers are now more inclined toward innovative beauty products that meet their needs.

Moreover, globalization and digitalization have expanded access to information and products from various brands, fueling global demand for beauty products. However, these developments have intensified competition in the beauty industry, which urging companies to continuously innovate and adapt to emerging trends.

One of the key players in Indonesia's beauty industry is a multinational corporation known for its diverse range of personal care products. Among its iconic brands is a skincare product which has been an integral part of skincare routines in Indonesia for decades. The product was introduced in the 19th century as a treatment for wound and has evolved into one of the world's most popular skincare brands, offering various products which are appropriate for diverse skin's types or needs.

Despite its market success, including being the leading brand in the "Top 10 Best-Selling Body Lotions in E-Commerce" with a 26% market share (Kompas, 2024), the product still faces significant challenges. The challenges include a recent 15% decline in sales due to consumer boycotts and growing competition from local brands which emphasize unique value propositions, such as natural ingredients and halal certification. Therefore, to overcome these challenges, the product must enhance consumer's purchase intention, which is a key factor indicating the likelihood of future purchases.

Previous researches have identified several factors which influence purchase

intention, including influencer credibility, user-generated content (UGC), celebrity endorsements, and the mediating role of brand awareness. The selection of influencer credibility, user-generated content (UGC), and celebrity endorsement as independent variables in this study is based on their significant role in influencing consumer purchasing behavior, particularly in the beauty industry. Influencer credibility is crucial as it determines how much consumers trust and follow an influencer's recommendations (Farida et al., 2022).

UGC, on the other hand, has gained traction as a primary source of information for potential buyers. It provides authentic and user-driven insights that enhance consumer confidence in purchasing decisions (Kusuma et al., 2023; Anisa & Marlina, 2022). Celebrity endorsements also play a key role in brand positioning and consumer perception, as celebrities often strongly influence their followers' buying behaviors (Dewinta et al., 2023).

Furthermore, several studies have demonstrated that these three factors significantly impact brand engagement and purchase intention (Sesar et al., 2022; Pityo & Marlien, 2023). Given consumers' increasing reliance on digital media for product discovery and evaluation, these variables are highly relevant to understanding consumer behaviour in the Indonesian skincare market. However, there needs to be more consistency in previous research's findings to fill the gap in understanding the Indonesian market.

This study selects brand awareness as a mediating variable due to its significant role in bridging the relationship between marketing communication strategies and consumer purchase intentions. According to Muthuswamy (2023), brand awareness enhances purchase intention by reinforcing familiarity and trust in a product. Consumers are likely to purchase products

from brands they recognize, particularly in highly competitive industries such as skincare (Pitoyo & Marlien, 2023; Pangestoe & Purwianti, 2022).

Additionally, brand awareness is an intermediary factor that strengthens the impact of influencer marketing and celebrity endorsements. When influencers or celebrities promote a product, their endorsements can increase consumer recall of the brand, making it more likely for consumers to consider purchasing it (Sesar et al., 2022).

By establishing brand familiarity, consumers develop a higher level of confidence and emotional connection with the brand, subsequently influencing, the mediating role of brand awareness is essential in understanding the indirect impact of influencer credibility, UGC, and celebrity endorsement on purchase intention in this study.

Hence, this study aims to investigate the influence of influencer credibility, UGC, and celebrity endorsements on the purchase intention of skincare products in the Jabodetabek area, with brand awareness as a mediating variable. The research seeks to contribute to a deeper understanding of consumer's behavior and provide feasible insights for businesses who navigate the competitive beauty industry in Indonesia.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical foundation of this study is the Social Influence Theory, which was introduced by Kelman (1958). This theory explains how others influence individual's attitudes and behaviors within social contexts. The theory identified three processes of social influence. The first process is compliance, whereas individuals conform to others' expectations to gain rewards or avoid punishments.

The second process is identification, which occurs when individuals adopt behaviors to align themselves with influential figures, such influencers or celebrities. The third process is internalization, whereas individuals integrate external influences into their belief because these influences align with their values.

This study is relevant to the internalization process, as it examines how consumers are influenced by information provided by influencers, user-generated content, and celebrity endorsements. When these external influences regarding a brand resonate with consumers' pre-existing knowledge or values, they are more likely to perform behaviors favorable to the brand, such as their intention to buy from the brand.

2.2 Variables Definition

2.2.1 Influencer Credibility

According to Pradhan et al. (2022), influencers who maintain consistency in their messages and values are considered trustworthy. Moreover, Han and Balabanis (2023) highlighted that congruence between the influencer's expertise and the promoted product enhances credibility.

This study defines influencer credibility as the degree to which an influencer is perceived as reliable, relevant, and aligned with the promoted brand. This credibility is often measured based on the influencer's trustworthiness, attractiveness, and expertise (Martiningsih & Setyawan, 2022).

2.2.2 Celebrity Endorsement

Nhuong and Truong (2024) described celebrity endorsement as utilizing celebrity's social reputation to elevate product's status. Meanwhile, Spry, Pappu, and Cornwell (2019) argued that endorsement is a collaboration with a

celebrity to attract consumer's attention and strengthen brand's credibility.

In this study, celebrity endorsement is defined as a marketing strategy involving celebrities to increase a product's attractiveness. Customers can feel attracted directly to the product because of its characteristics or feel attracted indirectly because they simply want to follow any recommendations from the celebrity who promotes the product.

2.2.3 User-Generated Content (UGC)

Bolin (2021) defined UGC as a publicly available content created by individuals who aren't a part of the institutions related to the content. Moreover, Cuomo et al. (2020) emphasized that UGC is an information-sharing activity through social media, whereas such information can be used as a consideration for others.

This study defines UGC as information shared on social platforms or e-commerce sites that reflect personal views and experiences with products. The information is often fruitful for others who are considering to purchase a product as they provide more insights regarding it.

2.2.4 Brand Awareness

Enes et al. (2024) defined brand awareness as the extent to which a brand is familiar to consumers. Meanwhile, Cheung et al. (2020) suggested that brand awareness is consumer's ability to recall or recognize a brand based on their continuous interaction with it.

This study defines brand awareness as consumers' ability to recognize or recall a brand based on their previous interactions with it. The awareness can be specifically felt because of its product, advertisement, or any other attributes of the brand.

2.2.5 Purchase Intention

Chetioui et al. (2020) described purchase intention as consumer's desire to purchase a product, which reflects their potential future purchase behavior. Moreover, Coomber *et al.* (2023) defined it as consumer's tendencies to purchase a product or service in the future.

This study defines purchase intention as consumer's tendencies to buy a product in the future. The tendencies can be related to internal factors, such as personal desire, or external factors, such as a brand's marketing strategy.

2.3 Relationship Between Variables

2.3.1 Influencer Credibility and Brand Awareness

Muthuswamy (2023) and Sesar et al. (2022) found that credible influencers enhance brand awareness by providing reliable information regarding a brand, which making it more recognizable and recallable. Meanwhile, Lou and Yuan (2019) emphasized that customers have a high tendency to listen to a credible influencer, which will directly increase their awareness toward the promoted brand.

H1: Influencer credibility positively affects brand awareness of a skincare product in Jabodetabek.

2.3.2 Influencer Credibility and Purchase Intention

The expertise, trustworthiness, and attractiveness of an influencer can significantly affect purchase intention (Farida et al., 2022; Lou & Yuan, 2019). Moreover, Herrando and Hoyos (2022) argued that credible influencers can emotionally connect with consumers, which increase their likelihood to purchase. When influencers' expertises align with the brand's values, they strengthen consumer's confidence to buy from the brand because they believe that

the influencers give a reliable information regarding the product.

H2: Influencer credibility positively affects purchase intention toward a skincare product in Jabodetabek.

2.3.3 Celebrity Endorsement and Brand Awareness

Paramhita and Purnami (2019) concluded that celebrity endorsement positively and significantly affects brand awareness. Celebrities attract consumer's attention, which make brands more memorable.

Meanwhile, Dewinta et al. (2023) suggested that celebrity endorsement through social media positively and significantly affects brand awareness as celebrities have a high amount of followers, which make them able to reach a wide range of market.

H3: Celebrity endorsement positively affects brand awareness of a skincare product in Jabodetabek.

2.3.4 Celebrity Endorsement and Purchase Intention

Alim and Budiarti (2021) found that relevant celebrity endorsements can enhance consumer's purchase intention by associating the promoted products with the celebrity's status. Ezra and Firdausy (2024) supported the statement, whereas a celebrity who has a good reputation can increase the promoted product's attractiveness, which makes celebrity endorsement a good strategy to improve purchase intention.

H4: Celebrity endorsement positively affects purchase intention toward a skincare product in Jabodetabek.

2.3.5 User-Generated Content (UGC) and Purchase Intention

Putri (2020) and Wafiyah and Wusko (2023) confirmed that UGC significantly influences purchase intention because a positive UGC can increase

consumer's positive perception regarding a brand, which increases their intention to buy from the brand.

Moreover, customers often have a high intention to purchase a product when they see that a product has more positive UGC than the negative ones. Customers may also make a purchase if they can tolerate the negative UGC regarding the product or if there are consistent positive UGC regarding it.

H5: User-generated content positively affects purchase intention toward a skincare product in Jabodetabek.

2.3.6 Brand Awareness and Purchase Intention

Dewinta et al. (2023) and Muthuswamy (2023) highlighted that brand awareness fosters purchase intention because customers who are familiar with a brand tend to be more confident to buy from the brand. Moreover, Pitoyo and Marlen (2023) suggested that brand awareness plays an essential role in increasing purchase intention because customers are more likely to buy from a brand that they have already known.

H6: Brand awareness positively affects purchase intention toward a skincare product in Jabodetabek.

2.3.7 Influencer Credibility and Purchase Intention through Brand Awareness

Sesar et al. (2022) and Muthuswamy (2023) found that brand awareness significantly mediates the effect of influencer credibility on purchase intention. The result suggests that information from an influencer regarding a product can motivate customer's intention to purchase the product if the customers have previously known about the product.

H7: Brand awareness mediates the effect of influencer credibility on purchase intention toward a skincare product in Jabodetabek.

2.3.8 Celebrity Endorsement and Purchase Intention through Brand Awareness

Paramhita and Purnami (2019) and Dewinta et al. (2023) concluded that brand awareness significantly mediates the effect of celebrity endorsement on purchase intention. Celebrity has the ability to reach a wide range of customers, thereby a collaboration with them can increase

customer's awareness toward the brand, which will eventually increase customer's intention to buy from the brand.

H8: Brand awareness mediates the effect of celebrity endorsement on purchase intention toward a skincare product in Jabodetabek.

Based on the relationship between variables, Figure 1 illustrates the research model utilized in this study.

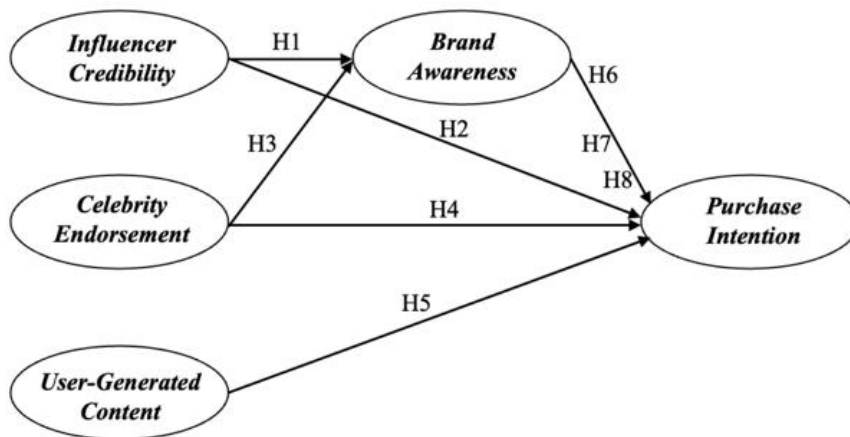


Figure 1 : Research Model

3. Research Method

3.1. Research Design

This study employs a descriptive research design to describe a phenomena and a population's characteristics (Bougie & Sekaran, 2020). This research seeks to explain the effects of influencer credibility, celebrity endorsement, and user-generated content on purchase intention for a skincare product, along with the mediating role of brand awareness.

Moreover, data collection was conducted by using a cross-sectional approach, whereas the data was gathered from September to November 2024 by using Google Forms.

3.2. Population, Sampling, and Sample Size

The population of this study consists of Generation Z consumers who are

familiar with and users of a skincare product. This study focuses on Generation Z as respondents due to their digital proficiency and strong influence in the beauty industry. Gen Z is known for its active engagement with social media, frequently interacting with influencers, user-generated content, and celebrity endorsements to inform their purchase intentions (Pradhan et al., 2023).

Unlike previous generations, Gen Z consumers rely more on online reviews and peer recommendations than traditional advertisements (Bolin, 2021). Additionally, they exhibit a high level of brand consciousness, with a preference for brands that align with their values and digital experiences (Chetioui et al., 2020).

Gen Z represents a significant portion of skincare product consumers in the Indonesian beauty market, making

them a highly relevant target for digital marketing strategies (Dewinta et al., 2023). This study aims to provide insights into how digital influence shapes their purchase intentions and brand perceptions in the skincare industry by focusing on this demographic. According to Malhotra (2020), a population includes all elements that share specific characteristics which are relevant to the research problem.

Moreover, this study uses non-probability sampling, thereby each population's member has no equal chance for being selected (Malhotra, 2020). Specifically, convenience sampling technique was employed, which is selecting respondents based on accessibility and availability.

The sample of this research includes Generation Z consumers in Jabodetabek who have used a skincare product. The

minimum sample size for this research is 150 respondents, but to account for incomplete or invalid data, this study will try to collect data from 200 participants.

The sample size aligns with Malhotra (2020) who suggested that sample size should be 100 to 200 respondents for survey-based studies to ensure validity of the data.

3.3 Operationalization of Variables and Instruments

This study identifies influencer credibility, celebrity endorsement, and user-generated content as independent variables, with brand awareness as mediating variable and purchase intention as dependent variable. The operationalization of these variables is detailed in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1 Indicators of Variables

Variable/ Dimensions	Indicator	Code
Celebrity Endorsement	The celebrity promoting this product is physically attractive.	CE1
	I trust the product advertised by this celebrity.	CE2
	The celebrities promoting this product have used it themselves.	CE3
	This celebrity is honest in recommending this product.	CE4
Influencer Credibility-Attractiveness	The influencer promoting this product is visually appealing.	ICA1
	The influencer promoting this product has a unique style.	ICA2
	The influencer displays positive charisma which gives positive impression when promoting this product.	ICA3
	The influencer has an engaging personality.	ICA4
Influencer Credibility-Trustworthiness	The influencer is dependable.	ICT1
	The influencer is honest.	ICT2
	The influencer instills confidence.	ICT3
	The influencer is sincere.	ICT4
Influencer Credibility-Expertise	The influencer is knowledgeable about the product.	ICE1
	The influencer is experienced.	ICE2
	The influencer is competent.	ICE3
	The influencer is skilled.	ICE4
User-Generated Content	Social media content enhances my awareness of this brand.	UGC1
	I consider social media content when deciding on purchases.	UGC2
	Social media content gives honest perspectives about products.	UGC3

	I frequently view social media content related to this product.	UGC4
Brand Awareness	This brand is recognizable among competitors.	BA1
	Discussions about product categories remind me of this brand.	BA2
	Product discussions remind me of this brand's characteristics.	BA3
Purchase Intention	I plan to purchase this brand's products.	PI1
	I have a strong tendency to buy this brand's products.	PI2
	I am confident that I will buy this product.	PI3
	I am willing to purchase this product.	PI4

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Validity and Reliability Analysis

The validity and reliability analysis ensures that the indicators are appropriate and consistent in measuring the constructs. This research utilized the PLS-SEM approach by using SmartPLS 4.0 software to perform the analysis. The analysis includes validity (convergent and discriminant validity) and reliability (Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability).

4.1.1 Validity Analysis

Convergent validity evaluates the extent to which a construct's indicators correlate and measure the same construct. This is assessed by using loading factor and Average Variance Extracted (AVE).

According to Hair et al. (2022), a loading factor more than 0.5 is considered valid, with an ideal value being above 0.7. Additionally, AVE value should exceed 0.5 to confirm that the construct explains more than half of the construct's variance.

Table 4.1 Result of Loading Factor Analysis

Indicator	Influencer Credibility	Celebrity Endorsement	User-Generated Content	Brand Awareness	Purchase Intention
ICA1	0.763				
ICA2	0.813				
ICA3	0.753				
ICA4	0.735				
ICT1	0.771				
ICT2	0.813				
ICT3	0.828				
ICT4	0.777				
ICE1	0.775				
ICE2	0.786				
ICE3	0.783				
ICE4	0.745				
CE1		0.746			
CE2		0.751			
CE3		0.857			
CE4		0.830			
UGC1			0.786		
UGC2			0.739		
UGC3			0.760		

UGC4			0.812		
BA1				0.686	
BA2				0.828	
BA3				0.761	
PI1					0.854
PI2					0.795
PI3					0.841
PI4					0.820

Notes: Influencer Credibility Attractiveness (ICA), Influencer Credibility Trustworthiness (ICT), Influencer Credibility Expertise (ICE), Celebrity Endorsement (CE), User-Generated Content (UGC), Brand Awareness (BA), and Purchase Intention (PI).

Table 4.2 Result of AVE Analysis

Variable	AVE
Influencer Credibility – Attractiveness	0.587
Influencer Credibility – Trustworthiness	0.637
Influencer Credibility – Expertise	0.597
Celebrity Endorsement	0.636
User-Generated Content	0.600
Brand Awareness	0.578
Purchase Intention	0.685

Table 4.1 presents the loading factor value of each indicator, which suggests that every indicator's loading factor is more than 0.5, thereby fulfilled the criteria.

Meanwhile, Table 4.2 shows the AVE values for all constructs, which suggests that every construct's AVE value is higher than 0.5, thereby every variable fulfilled the criteria for AVE analysis and convergent validity analysis.

Moreover, discriminant validity ensures that constructs that are supposed

to be unrelated are indeed unrelated. It is evaluated by using cross-loadings and Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT).

Cross-loadings assess whether an indicator is more strongly associated with its own construct compared to other constructs (Henseler et al., 2015), while HTMT measures the degree of similarity between constructs and indicates discriminant validity if all values are below 1 (Hamid et al., 2017).

Table 4.3 Result of Cross-Loading Analysis

Indicator	ICA	ICT	ICE	CE	UGC	BA	PI
ICA1	0.758	0.511	0.556	0.360	0.401	0.326	0.293
ICA2	0.813	0.594	0.580	0.419	0.477	0.342	0.429
ICA3	0.754	0.531	0.562	0.487	0.522	0.360	0.388
ICA4	0.738	0.546	0.554	0.442	0.380	0.239	0.285
ICT1	0.636	0.772	0.551	0.451	0.434	0.290	0.301
ICT2	0.548	0.814	0.630	0.463	0.501	0.334	0.440
ICT3	0.546	0.828	0.540	0.477	0.446	0.374	0.385
ICT4	0.544	0.775	0.554	0.503	0.493	0.374	0.374

ICE1	0.604	0.619	0.778	0.538	0.528	0.301	0.341
ICE2	0.510	0.444	0.787	0.396	0.457	0.344	0.232
ICE3	0.569	0.516	0.780	0.382	0.374	0.431	0.314
ICE4	0.579	0.611	0.744	0.417	0.481	0.362	0.360
CE1	0.411	0.425	0.393	0.746	0.458	0.261	0.298
CE2	0.323	0.370	0.250	0.751	0.384	0.236	0.270
CE3	0.521	0.515	0.509	0.857	0.622	0.347	0.398
CE4	0.486	0.546	0.573	0.830	0.585	0.399	0.414
UGC1	0.519	0.470	0.440	0.490	0.786	0.374	0.479
UGC2	0.423	0.444	0.489	0.541	0.739	0.334	0.361
UGC3	0.395	0.473	0.440	0.530	0.760	0.414	0.421
UGC4	0.459	0.442	0.491	0.498	0.812	0.429	0.544
BA1	0.297	0.239	0.302	0.169	0.263	0.680	0.383
BA2	0.338	0.400	0.407	0.314	0.399	0.827	0.356
BA3	0.309	0.330	0.347	0.418	0.473	0.766	0.360
PI1	0.430	0.426	0.393	0.421	0.504	0.388	0.853
PI2	0.271	0.313	0.237	0.346	0.453	0.277	0.796
PI3	0.401	0.449	0.326	0.384	0.558	0.470	0.841
PI4	0.396	0.350	0.381	0.311	0.436	0.430	0.821

Notes: Influencer Credibility Attractiveness (ICA), Influencer Credibility Trustworthiness (ICT), Influencer Credibility Expertise (ICE), Celebrity Endorsement (CE), User-Generated Content (UGC), Brand Awareness (BA), and Purchase Intention (PI).

Table 4.4 Result of Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) Analysis

Variable	ICA	BA	CE	ICE	PI	ICT	UGC
ICA							
BA	0.596						
CE	0.692	0.535					
ICE	0.952	0.664	0.676				
PI	0.559	0.649	0.519	0.493			
ICT	0.906	0.596	0.717	0.894	0.560		
UGC	0.748	0.704	0.812	0.767	0.710	0.742	

Notes: Influencer Credibility Attractiveness (ICA), Brand Awareness (BA), Celebrity Endorsement (CE), Influencer Credibility Expertise (ICE), Purchase Intention (PI), Influencer Credibility Trustworthiness (ICT), dan User-Generated Content (UGC).

Table 4.3 presents the result of cross-loading analysis which shows that each indicator has a higher loading value with its construct compared to other constructs, thereby fulfilled the criteria. Meanwhile, Table 4.4 displays the result of HTMT analysis, whereas every variable has HTMT lower than 1, thereby fulfilled the criteria. Based on these

results, the constructs in this study can be considered as valid.

4.1.2 Reliability Analysis

Reliability analysis examines the consistency of indicators in measuring constructs. This is assessed by using Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability. The data can be considered as reliable if the Cronbach's alpha value is

higher than 0.5 (Setyowati et al., 2020), while composite reliability is higher than 0.7 (Hair et al., 2022).

Table 4.5 presents that all constructs fulfilled the criteria because every variable has Cronbach's alpha

higher than 0.5 and composite reliability higher than 0.7.

This confirms that all variables are reliable and can be analyzed further to examine the relationships between variables.

Table 4.5 Result of Reliability Analysis

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability
Influencer Credibility – Attractiveness	0.765	0.850
Influencer Credibility – Trustworthiness	0.809	0.875
Influencer Credibility – Expertise	0.775	0.855
Celebrity Endorsement	0.811	0.874
User-Generated Content	0.780	0.857
Brand Awareness	0.631	0.803
Purchase Intention	0.848	0.897

4.2 Data Analysis

This study analyzed the data by using Partial Least Squares-Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) approach with SmartPLS 4.0 software. The method was selected due to its ability to validate measurement models and evaluate the relationships between variables.

This study collected data from 186 Generation Z consumers in Jabodetabek who use a skincare product. The majority of respondents are female, aged between 17-23 years, whose last education is high school and is a university student.

4.2.1 R-Square (R²)

R-Square (R²) values show the variance of dependent variables that can be explained by independent variables. According to Hair et al. (2019), R² values of 0.25, 0.50, and 0.75 are categorized as weak, moderate, and substantial, respectively. Table 4.6 presents the results of R-Square analysis.

Table 4.6 Result of R² Analysis

Variable	R-Square
Brand Awareness	0.250
Purchase Intention	0.405

Based on Table 4.6, the R² value of purchase intention is 0.405, indicating that influencer credibility, celebrity endorsement, user-generated content, and brand awareness can explain 40,5% of purchase intention's variance. The R² value is categorized as moderate. Meanwhile, the R² value of brand awareness is 0.250, which is categorized as weak, suggesting that influencer credibility and celebrity endorser can only explain 25% of brand awareness' variance.

4.2.2 Effect Size (f²)

Effect size (f²) measures the effect of each independent variable toward R² value if it was excluded from the research model. Hair et al. (2019) suggested that f² values of 0.02, 0.15, and 0.35 indicate small, medium, and large effects, respectively.

Table 4.7 shows that brand awareness has a small effect on purchase intention, as the f² value exceeds 0.02 but is below 0.15.

Similarly, influencer credibility and celebrity endorsement have small impact on brand awareness. However, both

variables show no effect toward purchase intention, as their f^2 values are below 0.02.

Additionally, user-generated content demonstrates a small effect on purchase intention, with an f^2 value of 0.114.

Table 4.7 Result of f^2 Analysis

Variable	f^2
Influencer Credibility → Brand Awareness	0.118
Influencer Credibility → Purchase Intention	0.012
Celebrity Endorsement → Brand Awareness	0.020
Celebrity Endorsement → Purchase Intention	0.000
User-Generated Content → Purchase Intention	0.114
Brand Awareness → Purchase Intention	0.055

4.2.3 Goodness of Fit (GoF)

The Goodness of Fit (GoF) value is used to assess the overall suitability of dependent variable in explaining the research model. Hair et al. (2022) stated that GoF values of 0.1, 0.25, and 0.36 are categorized as small, medium, and large, respectively. The calculation of GoF is shown in Table 4.8.

Table 4.8 Result of GoF Analysis

Variable	AVE	R^2
Influencer Credibility Attractiveness	0.587	
Influencer Credibility Trustworthiness	0.637	
Influencer Credibility Expertise	0.597	
Celebrity Endorsement	0.636	
User-Generated Content	0.600	
Brand Awareness	0.578	0.250
Purchase Intention	0.685	0.405
Average	0.617	0.328

The calculation of GoF value in Table 4.8 was counted by using the following formula:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{GoF} &= \sqrt{\text{AVE} \times \text{R}^2} \\ &= \sqrt{0.617 \times 0.328} \\ &= 0.4499 \end{aligned}$$

The GoF value is higher than 0.36, thereby placing it in the “large” category. Therefore, the result indicates that the dependent variable explains the research model well.

4.2.4 Path Coefficient

Path coefficient analysis describes the strength and direction of relationships between variables (Hair et al., 2019). Table 4.9 presents the results of path coefficient analysis.

Table 4.9 Result of Path Coefficient Analysis

Variable	Path Coefficient	Result
H1: Influencer Credibility → Brand Awareness	0.385	Positive
H2: Influencer Credibility → Purchase Intention	0.122	Positive
H3: Celebrity Endorsement → Brand Awareness	0.158	Positive
H4: Celebrity Endorsement → Purchase Intention	0.023	Positive
H5: User-Generated Content → Purchase Intention	0.390	Positive
H6: Brand Awareness → Purchase Intention	0.215	Positive

H7: Influencer Credibility → Brand Awareness → Purchase Intention	0.083	Positive
H8: Celebrity Endorsement → Brand Awareness → Purchase Intention	0.034	Positive

Based on Table 4.9, brand awareness, celebrity endorsement, influencer credibility, and user-generated content (UGC) positively affect purchase intention with the path coefficient value being 0.215, 0.023, 0.122, and 0.390. respectively. Moreover, influencer credibility and celebrity endorsement positively affect brand awareness with the path coefficient value being 0.385 and 0.158. Furthermore, brand awareness positively mediates the impact of influencer credibility and celebrity endorsement toward purchase intention, with the path coefficient value being 0.083 and 0.034.

4.2.5 Hypothesis Testing

The confidence level of this study is 95%. Hence, a hypothesis is accepted if the t-statistics value exceeds 1.96 and the p-value is below 0.05, but a hypothesis is

rejected if t-statistics value is below 1.96 and the p-value exceeds 0.05 (Hair et al., 2019).

Based on Table 4.10, hypotheses H1, H5, and H6 are supported, indicating that influencer credibility has a positive and significant influence on brand awareness, while user-generated content and brand awareness positively and significantly influence purchase intention.

Conversely, Hypotheses H2, H3, H4, H7, and H8 are rejected. Hence, influencer credibility doesn't significantly affect purchase intention, celebrity endorsement doesn't significantly affect purchase decision and brand awareness, while brand awareness doesn't significantly mediate the effect of influencer credibility and celebrity endorsement toward purchase intention.

Table 4.10 Result of Hypothesis Testing

Variable	p-values	t-statistics	Result
H1: Influencer Credibility → Brand Awareness	3.163	0.002	Accepted
H2: Influencer Credibility → Purchase Intention	1.104	0.270	Rejected
H3: Celebrity Endorsement → Brand Awareness	1.267	0.205	Rejected
H4: Celebrity Endorsement → Purchase Intention	0.275	0.784	Rejected
H5: User-Generated Content → Purchase Intention	4.188	0.000	Accepted
H6: Brand Awareness → Purchase Intention	2.418	0.016	Accepted
H7: Influencer Credibility → Brand Awareness → Purchase Intention	1.632	0.103	Rejected
H8: Celebrity Endorsement → Brand Awareness → Purchase Intention	1.198	0.231	Rejected

4.3 Discussions

This study investigates the influence of influencer credibility, celebrity endorsement, user-generated content (UGC), and brand awareness on purchase intention among Generation Z

consumers of a skincare product in Jabodetabek.

Based on hypothesis testing results, hypothesis H1 is accepted, indicating that influencer credibility positively and significantly affects brand awareness.

This finding aligns with Muthuswamy (2023), Sesar et al. (2022), and Lou and Yuan (2019), which asserted that influencer credibility enhances brand awareness.

Credible influencers can validate the quality of a skincare product and amplify consumers' ability to recognize the brand. This recognition is strengthened when customers associate the influencers with the promoted products, thereby customers will be reminded of the product when they see the influencer.

Conversely, hypothesis H2 is rejected, showing that influencer credibility does not significantly influence purchase intention. This result is consistent with Cahyadinigrum and Rahardjo (2023) who found a similar lack of influence.

The result can be caused by the similarity of information conveyed by various skincare influencers, which motivates consumers to seek additional verification from other sources before purchasing. Moreover, influencers tend to provide positive and credible information about a product, but sometimes the information is not what the customers need or what they hadn't already known.

Hypothesis H3 is also rejected, indicating that celebrity endorsement doesn't significantly affect brand awareness. This result aligns with the Theory of Celebrity-Brand Congruence which suggests that the absence of convergence between a celebrity's image and the brand weakens the endorsement's impact (Kamins, 1990).

Moreover, consumers may focus more on the celebrity rather than the brand, especially when the brand is already widely recognized. Consumers will be more excited to see the expectedly-new idea of endorsement, rather than the product, while the increasingly-common concept of a

celebrity describing a product will be more likely to be skipped by the consumers.

Similarly, hypothesis H4 is rejected, signifying that celebrity endorsement doesn't significantly influence purchase intention. This result aligns with Siregar and Saktiana (2024) who found that celebrity endorsement fails to drive purchase intention because it has been a very common strategy.

Moreover, while consumers may admire the celebrity, this admiration doesn't eventually proceed into purchase intention. Consumers may have previously been a fan of the celebrity, they may get inspired by the celebrity's work, but consumers earn value from the celebrity because of the work, not from the endorsement.

Meanwhile, hypothesis H5 is accepted, confirming that UGC positively and significantly impacts purchase intention. This result is supported by Putri (2020) and Wafiyah and Wusko (2023) who suggested that authentic user reviews build trust and encourage purchase intention.

UGC has been perceived as a reliable and relatable source of information, particularly when positive reviews outweigh the negative ones. Generally, positive reviews regarding a product will be similar, which will convince customers to make a purchase, while a seemingly high amounts of negative reviews is enough to make the customers doubt the product. Moreover, hypothesis H6 is also accepted, indicating that brand awareness significantly influences purchase intention. This finding is consistent with Dewinta et al. (2023) who concluded that a high brand awareness increases consumer's intention to purchase.

Consumers who are familiar with a skincare brand's quality and benefits are more likely to trust and choose the brand

over competitors. They are aware that the product can give the expected result for the skin, and that it won't cause side effects, thereby increasing their intention to purchase.

Furthermore, hypothesis H7 is rejected, indicating that brand awareness doesn't significantly mediate the impact of influencer credibility toward purchase intention. This result aligns with Pitoyo and Marlien (2023) who observed that for widely recognized products, brand awareness doesn't mediate the effect of influencer credibility on purchase intention.

Consumers already have sufficient knowledge about the product, thereby reducing the mediating role of brand awareness. The information from a credible influencer may directly influence purchase intention, but this study found that such information doesn't directly and indirectly affect purchase intention, thereby the information is regarded as irrelevant in considering purchase intention.

Finally, hypothesis H8 is rejected, showing that brand awareness doesn't significantly mediate the effect of celebrity endorsement on purchase intention. This result is consistent with Siregar and Saktiana (2024) who suggested that additional information from a celebrity endorsement doesn't influence purchase intention for products with high existing brand awareness.

Customers of established brands rely on their prior knowledge rather than information from celebrities. Such knowledge is considered as valid and reliable to increase purchase intention, while any information from a celebrity is interpreted as common information as it only consists of general and positive information regarding the product.

4.4 Managerial Implications

This research highlights key strategies that the skincare brand can adopt to strengthen its marketing approach among Generation Z consumers in Jabodetabek.

First, user-generated content (UGC) plays a significant role in influencing purchase intention. Therefore, the brand should prioritize campaigns encouraging consumers to share their authentic experiences with the product on social media. Promotions, such as giveaways or a gift for the best reviews, can amplify consumer's positive narratives. Highlighting these authentic contents can create a ripple effect, which can enhance purchase intention.

Second, brand awareness emerges as a crucial factor in driving purchase intention. Hence, the skincare product should invest in consistent branding efforts, such as focusing on digital advertisements and visually engaging campaigns emphasizing the brand's history and high-quality products. By reinforcing brand recognition, the brand can strengthen consumer's recall which may increase purchase intention.

Third, given Generation Z's strong presence on social media, the brand should prioritize digital engagement strategies by creating interactive content on platforms like TikTok or Instagram, such as live Q&A sessions, which can enhance interaction with customers. Additionally, highlighting continuous product innovation, such as eco-friendly packaging, can increase preferences of younger consumers and show the brand's commitment to meet consumer needs.

Meanwhile, this study concluded that influencer credibility and celebrity endorsement don't significantly influence purchase intention toward the skincare product, either directly or indirectly through brand awareness.

Therefore, the brand can reconsider the strategy as it cost much for the brand. Moreover, the brand can determine a more detailed key performance indicator for the strategy in order to identify its effectiveness, thereby the brand can decide on whether to keep using the strategy or allocate the funds for strategies which are more direct to customers, such as discount and cashback.

5. Conclusion

This study highlighted that influencer credibility positively and significantly influences brand awareness, but it doesn't significantly influence purchase intention. Meanwhile, celebrity endorsement doesn't significantly influence brand awareness and purchase intention. Moreover, user-generated content (UGC) and brand awareness emerge as a critical factor in influencing purchase intention positively and significantly. Furthermore, brand awareness doesn't significantly mediate the influence of influencer credibility and celebrity endorsement on purchase intention. However, while this research

provides insights into the influence of influencer credibility, celebrity endorsement, and UGC toward purchase intention, it doesn't examine other variables, such as pricing strategies, product innovations, or cultural differences, which may also play a role in improving purchase intention.

Future researches can explore these aspects to provide a more comprehensive understanding of consumer's behavior across different demographics and market segments. Moreover, future researches can identify customers in other cities to provide more information regarding factors that can affect purchase intention of the skincare product in Indonesia. The researches can also be proceeded with a comparative study to see if the information provided by a credible influencer and a celebrity can influence purchase intention toward the skincare product of customers who have different characteristics. These studies are expected to provide a more complete information for the skincare brand regarding the collaboration with influencer and celebrity who cost much to the brand.

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