

The Impact of Social Media Influencer on Consumer Purchase Behaviour toward MSME Food Vendors

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Abstract: The utilization of social media influencers has become a prevalent strategy for various organizations in this digital era, including Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises. This study aims to analyze the role of social media influencer on consumer purchase behavior in the digital era. Using a quantitative approach, this study explores how influencer's trustworthiness, attractiveness, experience, and content usefulness influence consumer purchase behavior. Data were collected by distributing 118 questionnaires to respondents consists of Indonesian culinary enthusiasts who engage with digital content produced by food influencer. Data analysis was performed using multiple linear regression. The results of this study indicate that influencer's trustworthiness, attractiveness, experience, and content usefulness have a positive and significant impact on purchasing behaviour both partially and simultaneously. This study provides managerial insights into how influencer marketing should be approached by companies. The findings emphasize that collaborating with social media influencer is essential as a strategic response to a highly contested market environment.

INTRODUCTION

Social media is a platform that is widely used in this digital era. In the past decade, social media has evolved into a powerful marketing tool, fundamentally transforming the way businesses connect with consumers (Dhiman & Bhati, 2025). Marketing has seen a tremendous transformation in recent years due to an expanding number of digital channels and the use of social media (Sneha & Vijayakumar, 2025). The emergence of social media networks has presented companies and brands with opportunities to utilize these platforms to accomplish their marketing and business objectives (Venciute et al., 2023). This trend has resulted in the emergence of a thriving multibillion dollar industry centred around influencer marketing (Bansah

et al., 2023). Influencer marketing is a result of the expansion of social media (Chiguvi et al., 2025). Influencers transcend the realm of mere celebrities by establishing a sense of intimacy and relatability with their audience (Prasanth & Priyan, 2024). A social media influencer is an individual who has developed a substantial following in a specific industry and can influence others through their authenticity and reach (Chiguvi et al., 2025).

As content paradigms shift, influencer-generated media has transitioned from polished and scripted messaging to more spontaneous and emotionally engaging narratives (Lestari & Yopiannor, 2025). This shift is particularly evident in the rise of Instagram Reels, where influencers are now expected to deliver content that not only entertains but also evokes relatability and trust (Lestari & Yopiannor, 2025). The influencers need to create campaigns that seem natural to their audience, rather than eliciting suspicions of covert advertising, such that followers believe the promoted message and adopt positive responses (e.g., purchase, recommend the products) (Belanche et al., 2021). Consumers are increasingly relying on social media influencers on Instagram, TikTok, Twitter and YouTube as well as influencer marketing to find out the reviews and recommendations to they would like to purchase before making a decision (Chavda & Chauhan, 2024). The relationship between influencers and their audiences also falls into the category of parasocial relationships. Horton & Wohl (1956) proposed the concept of parasocial interaction to describe one-way psychological relationships. When individuals feel an emotional bond with a figure, they tend to lower their critical defenses, making the information conveyed more credible.

Despite the fact that influencer marketing has become a new and attractive marketing concept today most of the business organizations around the world, especially the MSMEs have a little knowledge about its efficiency (Satapathy et al., 2022). Social media influencer marketing was found by many previous studies to be a significant factor in shaping consumer buying behaviour (Sarkis et al., 2024; Satapathy et al., 2022). Associating a celebrity figure with a brand has become an effective marketing strategy in today's marketing environment (Peterson et al., 2025). There is limited understanding of the mechanisms through which various influencer attributes and marketing approaches affect consumer attitudes and behaviors in the F&B industry (Cheah et al., 2024), particularly in the context of MSMEs.

Influencer marketing is becoming increasingly attractive in Indonesia, where social media usage is very high (Adinata et al., 2024). Parasocial relationships foster a perceived intimacy, leading audiences to view influencers as close associates, such as friends or even family members. Consumers often bypass rational needs, choosing to purchase products or services as a gesture of support for a trusted influencer they view as a digital friend. This phenomenon represents an underexplored area that deserves further empirical investigation. Given these backgrounds, this study aims to examine the role of social media influencer on purchase behaviour. Building upon this foundation, the research problems are defined as follows: (1) How does the trustworthiness of an influencer influence consumers' purchase behaviour? (2) How does the attractiveness of an influencer influence consumers' purchase behaviour? (3) How does the influencer's experience influence consumers' purchase behaviour? (4) How does the usefulness of an influencer's created social media content influence consumers' purchase behaviour?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Social Media Marketing

Social media marketing has become an important part of modern marketing strategies (Dehyadegari et al., 2025). Social media marketing involves using social media to engage

consumers anywhere, anytime via their computers, smartphones, tablets, and other digital devices (Kotler & Armstrong, 2018). It transforms the way consumers interact with companies and with each other (Solomon, 2018). Social media developments have revolutionized how consumers shop and interact, in turn calling for new marketing strategies and tactics (Kotler & Armstrong, 2018). The importance of influencers and influencer marketing is enhanced in social media and with the rise in technology-enabled platforms (Singh et al., 2026). Today's companies are using online, mobile, and social media to refine their targeting and to engage customers more deeply and interactively (Kotler & Armstrong, 2018).

Influencer

An influencer is a person who promotes the products or services of a company through the platform (Dehyadegari et al., 2025). Kotler & Armstrong (2018) defines influencer or opinion leader is a person within a reference group who, because of special skills, knowledge, personality, or other characteristics, exerts social influence on others. The power of social media influencers in influencing consumer behavior is widely acknowledged (Yang et al., 2026). Influencers who are active in social media play a significant role in deciding which items will succeed (Solomon, 2018). The phenomenon of influencer marketing has developed into an effective marketing strategy, especially in the digital era (Adinata et al., 2024). A study by Sarkis et al. (2024) found that social media influencer marketing has an impact on consumer buying behaviour. Similarly, Satapathy et al. (2022) revealed that influencer marketing has an impact on purchase behaviour.

Parasocial Relationship

The concept of parasocial interaction was first introduced to describe the one-way psychological relationship viewers feel toward media figures (Horton & Wohl, 1956). The development of digital technology has drastically changed this dynamic. In the era of social media, interactions that were once passive have now become more intense through commenting, live, and direct messaging features. Parasocial relationships are emotional and non-reciprocal social connections with media figures such as celebrities or influencers (Hoffner & Bond, 2022). Parasocial interactions significantly influence the values perceived by consumers (Feby et al., 2024).

Purchase Behaviour

The field of consumer behaviour covers a lot of ground: it is the study of the processes involved when individuals or groups select, purchase, use, or dispose of products, services, ideas, or experiences to satisfy needs and desires (Solomon, 2018). Consumer purchase behavior towards a product includes everything from the initial decision to buy it, to how they use it and whether or not they continue to purchase it in the future (Chiguvi et al., 2025). To understand how consumers actually make buying decisions, marketers must identify who makes and has input into the buying decision; people can be initiators, influencers, deciders, buyers, or users (Kotler & Keller, 2016). The process of shaping in purchase behaviour first by trying to consume a free sample, and after that purchase the product and lastly repurchase the product (Hawkins & Mothersbaugh, 2010).

Grounded in these theoretical premises, the proposed research framework is structured as follows:

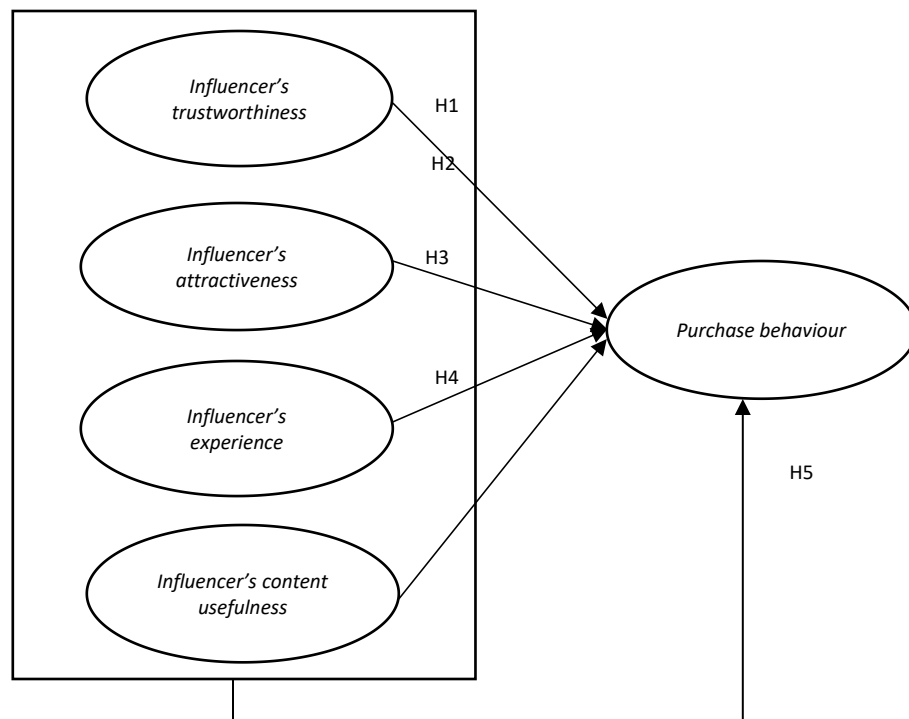


Figure 1 Conceptual Model

H1: The trustworthiness of an influencer has an impact on consumers' purchase behaviour.

H2: The attractiveness of an influencer has an impact on consumers' purchase behaviour.

H3: An influencer's experience has an impact on consumers' purchase behaviour.

H4: The usefulness of an influencer's created social media content has an impact on consumers' purchase behaviour.

H5: The trustworthiness, attractiveness, experience, and the content usefulness of an influencer simultaneously have an impact on consumers' purchase behaviour.

RESEARCH METHOD

Applying a quantitative approach through survey instrumentation, this explanatory study seeks to examine the relationship between influencer marketing and purchase behaviour. The population in this study consists of Indonesian culinary enthusiasts who engage with digital content produced by food influencer. The sample in this study consisted of 118 people selected using a purposive sampling technique. The sample determined in this study met the following criteria such as aged 18 years or above, a food or culinary enthusiast, and have been following the contents of one of the prominent Indonesian food vlogger and influencer, who are famous for the content he creates in the context of culinary gems across Indonesia, predominantly from MSMEs food vendors.

Primary data collection was facilitated through an online survey consisting of closed-ended items, administered using the Google Forms application in the month of February until March 2026. The questions in the questionnaire were adapted from Venciute et al. (2023). The first part of the questionnaire collected demographic information about respondents, and the second part investigated the scales used by respondents to evaluate 5 variables. The questions in the

questionnaire were adapted from Venciute et al. (2023). Responses for all items were gathered utilizing a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 being Strongly Disagree, to 5 being Strongly Agree. All of the hypothesis testing was conducted using multiple linear regression, utilizing SPSS Statistics 27 software.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

To assess validity of the instrument, Pearson Product-Moment correlation was employed, confirming that all items of questionnaire met the required criteria. Internal consistency was evaluated using Cronbach's Alpha, which demonstrated that all constructs were reliable.

Demographic Data

Table 1. Demographic Data

Characteristics	N	Percentage
Gender		
Male	55	46.6%
Female	63	53.4%
Age (years old)		
18-24	75	63.6%
25-31	15	12.7%
32-38	17	14.4%
39-45	4	3.4%
46-52	6	5.1%
>52	1	0.8%
Monthly Individual Expenses		
<Rp 2.000.000	75	63.6%
Rp 2.000.000 – Rp 4.000.000	33	28.0%
Rp 4.000.001 – Rp 6.000.000	7	5.9%
>6.000.000	3	2.5%
Occupation		
Full-time employed	32	27.1%
Part-time employed	3	2.5%
Self-employed	4	3.4%
Entrepreneur	4	3.4%
Not (yet) employed	11	9.3%
University student	64	54.2%
Total	118	100%

Source: Processed Data, 2026

This study utilized a sample size of 100 respondents, consists of Indonesian culinary enthusiasts who engage with digital content produced by food influencer. As presented in Table 1, the demographic data indicates most respondents (53,4%) identified as female, aged 18-24 years (63,6%), had monthly individual expenses of less than Rp 2.000.000 (63,6%), and were university students (54,2%).

Description of Research Variables

Table 2. Description of Research Variables

No	Item	Mean	SD	Min	Max
Influencer's Trustworthiness					
1	Honest	3.797	0.661	2	5
2	Trustworthy	3.763	0.649	2	5
3	Reliable	3.746	0.643	2	5
4	Sincere	3.703	0.777	2	5
Influencer's Attractiveness					
1	Attractive	4.119	0.706	3	5
2	Enthusiastic	4.271	0.662	3	5
3	Eccentric	3.856	0.719	2	5
4	Have a likeable personality	4.153	0.712	2	5
Influencer's Experience					
1	Knowledgeable	4.051	0.714	2	5
2	Competent	3.932	0.676	2	5
3	Expert	3.763	0.724	2	5
4	Have sufficient experience	3.941	0.695	2	5
Influencer's Content Usefulness					
1	Valuable	3.627	0.689	2	5
2	Good quality	4.025	0.745	1	5
3	Useful	4.017	0.679	2	5
4	Aligns with one's interest	3.534	0.736	1	5
5	Helpful	3.941	0.754	2	5
Purchase Behaviour					
1	Intention to visit	3.797	0.734	2	5
2	Recommend	3.737	0.685	2	5
3	Visit	3.847	0.675	2	5
4	Repeat visit	3.373	0.894	1	5
5	Good experience	3.703	0.671	2	5
6	Previous visit	3.576	0.871	1	5

Source: Processed Data, 2026

The results of the description of the Influencer's Trustworthiness variable, formed by four items, obtained an average with a range of 3.703 to 3.797, indicating that respondents have a positive perception of Influencer's Trustworthiness, meaning that respondents believe the influencer's Trustworthiness is good. The results of the description of the Influencer's Attractiveness variable, formed by four items, obtained an average with a range of 3.856 to 4.271, indicating that respondents have a positive perception of Influencer's Attractiveness, meaning that respondents believe the influencer's Influencer's Attractiveness is good.

The results of the description of the Influencer's Experience variable, formed by four items, obtained an average with a range of 3.763 to 4.051, indicating that respondents have a

positive perception of Influencer's Experience, meaning that respondents believe the influencer's Influencer's Experience is good. The description of the Influencer's Content Usefulness variable, formed by five items, yielded an average range of 3.534 to 4.025, indicating that respondents had a favorable perception of Influencer's Content Usefulness, meaning that they believed the influencer's Influencer's Content Usefulness was good. The description of the Purchase Behavior variable, formed by six items, yielded an average range of 3.373 to 3.847, indicating that respondents had a favorable perception of Purchase Behavior, meaning that they believed the customer's Purchase Behavior was good.

The Classical Assumption Tests

The classical assumption tests indicate that the research data follow a normal distribution, with no indication of multicollinearity or heteroscedasticity.

Table 3. Residual Normality Assumption Test

Test	p	Information
Kolmogorov-Smirnov	0.200	Normal

Source: Processed Data, 2026

Testing the normality of the residuals using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test obtained a significance value (p) that met the requirements ($p > 0.05$) thus indicating that the assumption of normality of the residuals was met.

Table 4. Heteroscedasticity Assumption Test

Independent Variable	p	Information
Influencer's Trustworthiness	0.886	Heteroscedasticity does not occur
Influencer's Attractiveness	0.393	Heteroscedasticity does not occur
Influencer's Experience	0.937	Heteroscedasticity does not occur
Influencer's Content Usefulness	0.774	Heteroscedasticity does not occur

Source: Processed Data, 2026

The heteroscedasticity test using the Glejser test obtained a significance value (p) that met the requirements ($p > 0.05$) thus indicating that the heteroscedasticity assumption was met.

Table 5. Multicollinearity Assumption Test

Independent Variable	Tolerance	VIF	Information
Influencer's Trustworthiness	0.520	1.922	There is no multicollinearity
Influencer's Attractiveness	0.572	1.749	There is no multicollinearity
Influencer's Experience	0.593	1.685	There is no multicollinearity
Influencer's Content Usefulness	0.688	1.454	There is no multicollinearity

Source: Processed Data, 2026

The regression model's suitability is statistically validated by the data in Table 5, which confirms the absence of significant multicollinearity. Specifically, the observed tolerance value >0.10 and Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) remains below the critical threshold of 10, thereby ensuring the stability of the coefficient estimates.

Hypothesis Testing

Table 6. Linear Regression Test

Independent Variable	Coefficient	t	p
Constant	2.103	0.963	0.338
Influencer's Trustworthiness	0.315	2.152	0.034
Influencer's Attractiveness	0.288	2.013	0.047
Influencer's Experience	0.300	2.126	0.036
Influencer's Content Usefulness	0.370	2.759	0.007
Calculated F-value = 21.719			
Significance (p) = 0.000			
Adjusted R-square = 0.415			

Source: Processed Data, 2026

The effect of influencer's trustworthiness on purchase behavior yielded a regression coefficient of 0.315 and a significance value (p) of 0.034 ($p < 0.05$), indicating H1 is accepted. The effect of influencer's attractiveness on purchase behavior yielded a regression coefficient of 0.288 and a significance value (p) of 0.047 ($p < 0.05$), indicating H2 is accepted. The effect of influencer's experience on purchase behavior yielded a regression coefficient of 0.300 and a significance value (p) of 0.036 ($p < 0.05$), indicating H3 is accepted. The effect of influencer's content usefulness on purchase behavior yielded a regression coefficient of 0.370 and a significance value (p) of 0.007 ($p < 0.05$), indicating H4 in this study is accepted.

These results indicate that each independent variable has a positive and significant effect on purchase behavior. This means that better respondents' perceptions of influencer's trustworthiness, influencer's attractiveness, influencer's experience, and influencer's content usefulness significantly impact purchase behaviour. Simultaneous testing yielded a significance value (p) of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$), indicating a simultaneous effect on purchase behavior. The coefficient of determination test showed that 41.5% of the influence on purchase behavior can be explained by all independent variables.

The research results confirm that the trustworthiness of an influencer has an impact on consumers' purchase behaviour. This finding is consistent with Chiguvi et al. (2025) which stated that the social media influencer's trustworthiness has got a strong significant positive impact on consumer behaviour. However, this study was not in line Venciute et al. (2023) which found that the trustworthiness of an influencer was not found to have a positive direct impact on followers' purchase. In this study, an honest, trustworthy, reliable, and sincere influencer make the audiences have the intention and desire to visit the food vendor or buy the recommended food and even intend to recommend the food or food vendor recommended by the influencer. Chiguvi et al. (2025) stated that management should select social media influencers who are sincere, reliable, honest and dependable. Second, the attractiveness of an influencer has an impact on consumers' purchase behaviour. Chiguvi et al. (2025) stated that companies should consider the attractiveness of the social media influencer to stimulate consumer behaviour. This finding also

in line with Bansah et al. (2023) which stated that influencer attractiveness affects clients' purchase behaviour. Influencers who have a likeable personality, enthusiastic, eccentric, and attractive demeanor create good customer purchasing behavior.

Third, the experience of an influencer has an impact on consumers' purchase behaviour. Area of expertise of the influencers also plays a major role in influencing buying behavior of the consumers (Satapathy et al., 2022). This study is in line with Venciute et al. (2023) which found that the experience of an influencer has a positive direct impact on followers' purchase behaviour. Influencer who are knowledgeable, competent, expert, and have sufficient experience create good customer purchasing behavior. Furthermore, the usefulness of an influencer's created social media content has an impact on consumers' purchase behaviour. Contents that are fit the values

of the audience, good quality, useful, relevant to the audience's field of interest, and helps a lot of people make the best decision in searching for desired products create good customer purchasing behavior. Dehyadegari et al. (2025) stated that the attractive content created by influencers, can strengthen women's purchase intention. The usefulness of an influencer's content has a positive direct impact on followers' purchase behaviour (Venciute et al., 2023). In conclusion, the trustworthiness, attractiveness, experience, and the content usefulness of an influencer simultaneously have an impact on consumers' purchase behaviour. The manager or owner or MSME food vendors should consider collaborating with influencers. The use of social media influencer strategies impacts consumers' purchasing behavior. In this study, the influencer studied were a popular Indonesian food vlogger with millions of subscribers and has a massive impact on local MSMEs. He often features a small, often struggling food vendors in his content. These MSME food vendors leverage influencer reviews to drive growth. To be effective, influencers must prioritize credibility, aesthetic appeal, expertise, and the practical value of their content.

CONCLUSION

By bridging gaps in marketing and consumer behavior literature, this research provides a robust theoretical foundation for subsequent academic inquiries. Drawing from the empirical results and discussion, this study concludes that (1) the trustworthiness of an influencer has an impact on consumers' purchase behaviour; (2) the attractiveness of an influencer has an impact on consumers' purchase behaviour; (3) an influencer's experience has an impact on consumers' purchase behaviour; (4) the usefulness of an influencer's created social media content has an impact on consumers' purchase behaviour; and (5) the trustworthiness, attractiveness, experience, and the content usefulness of an influencer simultaneously have an impact on consumers' purchase behaviour.

This study has several limitations. First, it only examined the context of social media influencers in the culinary field and only focused on one specific food vlogger. Future research is recommended to explore different fields, such as beauty, health, sports, finance, education, and other fields. By conducting research on different influencers' areas of expertise, it is hoped that interesting findings will emerge regarding the role of an influencer's trustworthiness, attractiveness, experience, and content usefulness on the purchasing behaviour of their target audience. Second, this study examined food influencer who occasionally receive endorsements and paid promotions from brands. Future study is expected to examine influencers who do not accept any brand collaborations to determine whether the role of an influencer's trustworthiness, attractiveness, experience, and content usefulness will have a different impact on purchasing behaviour. Third, this study used a quantitative approach. Future research is expected to enrich

the focus of research on social media influencers with a qualitative approach to obtain in-depth research results.

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