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# Effect of Social Media Engagement and Beauty Influencers on Purchase Intentions of Indonesian Beauty Products

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## Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis hubungan antara keterlibatan media sosial, pemberi pengaruh, dan niat membeli pada produk kecantikan lokal di Indonesia. Selain itu, penelitian ini juga dilakukan untu mengetahui apakah keterlibatan media sosial memediasi hubungan pemberi pengaruh dan niat membeli dan niat membeli. Metode penelitian yang dilakukan adalah metode kuantitatif dengan sampel konsumen produk kecantikan lokal Indonesia yang aktif mengikuti pemberi pengaruh produk kecantikan Indonesia di media sosial, dengan jumlah sampel sebanyak 104 orang, yang dikumpulkan dengan menggunakan teknik purposive sampling. Alat ukur yang digunakan diadaptasi dari penelitian sebelumnya, dan disusun menjadi kuesioner yang dijawab dengan pilihan jawaban berskala Likert lima poin. Berdasarkan hasil analisis, beauty influencer tidak secara langsung berdampak pada niat membeli, namun secara signifikan meningkatkan keterlibatan media sosial. Keterlibatan media sosial, pada gilirannya, mempengaruhi secara positif niat membeli dan bertindak sebagai variabel mediasi antara influencer kecantikan dan niat membeli.

Kata Kunci: Keterlibatan Media Social; Pemberi Pengaruh Kecantikan; Niat Membeli; Produk Kecantikan.

## Abstract

This study aims to analyze the relationship between social media engagement, influencers, and purchase intention for local beauty products in Indonesia. Apart from that, this research was also conducted to find out whether social media involvement mediates the relationship between influencers and purchase intentions. The research method used was a quantitative approach. The research sample includes Indonesian beauty product consumers who actively follow Indonesian beauty product influencers on social media. The data collection successfully recruits a total sample of 104 people, gathered using a purposive sampling technique. The research instrument used was adapted from previous studies and compiled into a questionnaire that was completed with five-point Likert scale answer choices. Based on the results of the analysis, beauty influencers do not directly impact purchase intentions but significantly increase social media engagement. Social media engagement, in turn, positively influences purchase intent and acts as a mediating variable between beauty influencers and purchase intention.

Keyword: Social Media Engagement; Beauty Influencers; Consumer Purchase Intention; Local Beauty Products.

RESEARCH ARTICLE

# 1. Introduction

The growth of personal care and cosmetics market in Indonesia is estimated at 4.86% in 2024-2029 and will become the 5th largest market in the world, with the personal care category generating the most revenue (Nugraheny, Rakhma & Setiawan, 2024). The industry offers a broad selection of products to suit different customer needs. Indonesia offers prospects for both international and domestic market participants in the industry as a developing market for cosmetics and personal hygiene products. The demand from Indonesian consumers for both domestic and foreign beauty goods has increased in recent years. This was seen in the nation's growing trend of revenue in the beauty and personal care sector. Revenue of beauty & personal care market in Indonesia 8.8bn USD, value growth of the personal care segment in Indonesia 7% (Statista, n.d.). In the digital era, social media have largely influenced how consumers interact with brands, specifically in the beauty industry (Binwani & Ho, 2019). Globally, the industry is experiencing a major shift in marketing strategies, with an increasing reliance on social media platforms to engage consumers (Maitri, 2023). This tendency is especially obvious in Indonesia, where the rapid expansion of internet users. According to data from Internet Service Provider Association (Asosiasi Penyelenggara Jasa Internet Indonesia), the number of internet users in Indonesia in 2024 are expected to reach 221.563.479 out of a total population of 278.896.200 in 2023. APJII's 2024 internet penetration report showed a 79.5% penetration rate, marking a 1.4% increase from previous period (APJII). As a result of this growth, social media has become a crucial tool for businesses to engage with potential customers. According to a report published in 2020 by Euromonitor International, one of the fastest-growing sectors in Southeast Asia is Indonesia's beauty market, with valued at IDR 355.4 trillion. Furthermore, the Coordinating Ministry for Economic Affairs revealed that from January to November 2023, the export value of cosmetics, fragrances, and essential oils was USD 770.8 million, or IDR 12 trillion (Limanseto, 2024). Moreover, by halfway through 2023, the number of cosmetic industries had grown to 1.010 companies, an increase of 21.9% compared to 2022, which had only 913 companies (Limanseto, 2024). Along with contributing to the rising demand for beauty products, social media has played a significant impact on consumer purchase behavior and preferences (Alika *et al*). Social media platforms including Youtube, Instagram, and Tiktok have emerged as effective tools for beauty influencers to promote products (Alika *et al*., 2024), specifically local beauty brands that are becoming more prevalent among Indonesian consumers.

Beauty influencers are defined as individuals with significant social media followings who share beauty related content (Ligariaty *et al*., 2021), and they have become an affluential part of this growing industry. They have the ability to engage audiences, create trends, and endorse products (Okonkwo *et al*., 2023), skills which allow them to have profound impact to consumer behavior. According to the findings of a recent Indonesian study, consumers are more inclined to purchase products that influencers they follow when they trust their recommendations (Cahyani *et al*., 2024). This is a particularly significant thing that happens in Indonesia, where consumers are increasingly trusting social media more to research products that they want to buy and read reviews, especially from influencers they find reliable. Social media engagement is the process of absorbing content by engaging with the interface, becoming cognitively immersed in the content, and then participating in behaviours such as conversation and sharing of content (Song *et al*., 2023). The transition from traditional marketing to social media interactions has diminished administrative control over brand communications, emphasising the significance of understanding customer participation in online social networks (Cheung *et al*., 2020). Maximum utilization of social media engagement will lead to increased brand trust, commitment, and loyalty (Asad, 2024). Although social media engagement and beauty influencers are increasingly playing a role in the beauty industry (Alika *et al*., 2024), research on the specific impact of these factors on consumers' purchase intention of local beauty products in Indonesia is still quite limited. Local brands face intense competition from global beauty companies (Khairani *et al*., 2021), making it important to understand consumer behavior in this context. This study aims to fill this gap by examining the impact of social media engagement and beauty influencers on consumers' purchase intention of local beauty products in Indonesia. Through this analysis, this study hopes to provide useful insights for local beauty brands to improve their marketing strategies

**RESEARCH ARTICLE**

and strengthen their competitiveness in the market. Consumers purchase products for a variety of reasons, including fulfilling hedonistic desires, meeting functional needs, improving social status, or pleasing others (Tjokrosaputro & Cokki, 2019). Purchase intention refers to the motivation or willingness of a consumer to buy a particular product or service (Wang *et al*., 2023). As noted by Yu (2023), several factors influence a consumer's purchase intention, such as product price, brand trust, product quality, and consumer perception. It is also an essential factor in assessing new distribution channels, guiding marketing decisions on consumer segmentation and geographic markets, and predicting actual consumer buying behavior (Peña-García *et al*., 2020). Additionally, the visual impact of social media advertisements can significantly increase consumers' purchase intention for certain products (Suprapto *et al*. 2020). Social media engagement refers to the process by which users interact with and consume content, becoming cognitively immersed and participating in behaviors such as discussions and sharing (Trunfio & Rossi, 2021). This interaction is vital in facilitating effective communication and connection between beauty brands and both their potential and existing consumers (Eckstein, 2024). In today's digital landscape, social media engagement is a powerful tool employed across various industries to enhance brand performance. By fostering stronger brand image and increasing brand loyalty, effective engagement strategies can lead to improved consumer relations and long-term business success.

Research shows that social media engagement plays a crucial role in influencing consumer behavior by facilitating increased exposure to beauty products and trends. According to Alzate (2021), engagement through social networks provides consumers with interactive spaces where they can access peer-generated content, such as reviews and tutorials, which significantly influence their decision-making processes. This peer-driven content enhances consumers' trust in beauty brands, making them more likely to purchase or recommend products (Alzate *et al*., 2021). Ki *et al*. (2019) highlight that engagement strategies centered around consumer interaction, such as responding to comments, creating user-generated content, and sharing high-quality visual content, boost brand loyalty. This increased loyalty can translate into higher purchase intention, as engaged consumers often feel a stronger emotional connection to the brand. In the beauty industry, where visual appeal and authenticity play a significant role, brands that actively engage their audience through tutorials, influencer collaborations, and behind-the-scenes content see higher levels of consumer involvement and brand advocacy (Ki *et al*.,2019). Therefore, conjecture the following hypothesis. H1: Social Media Engagement has a positive influence to purchase intention.

Influencers are people who engage on social media and impact their followers and audience through the content they share on these platforms (Vodák *et al*., 2019). Beauty influencers, in particular, specialize in producing content related to beauty and endorsing beauty products or brands (Gregor & Olejniczak, 2023). A beauty influencer is characterized as an expert in aesthetics who offers guidance on various improvement topics, including lifestyle, health, fashion, and beauty practices (Tran *et al*., 2020). These influencers are enthusiastic about using social media to share their content and promote both their own products and those of the brands they partner with. Beauty influencers gain significant advantages from utilizing different business promotion platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, LinkedIn, and YouTube. However, the benefits and opportunities they obtain are influenced by their individual personalities and skill sets (Castillo *et al*., 2022). Beauty influencers have gained significant influence over consumer choices and have been instrumental in boosting sales within the Indonesian market (Adi & Qastharin, 2024). Recent studies have shown that beauty influencers play a key role in increasing awareness of brands and products beyond just the target audience (Rachman, 2024). Rachman stated they have also impacted consumer behavior by motivating people to purchase these products. Moreover, beauty influencer serves an educational purpose, as it allows consumers to learn more about how to use products and what ingredients they contain (Rachman, 2024). In addition, beauty influencer simplifies the process for customers and potential customers to access information and content about a product (Gregor & Olejniczak, 2023). For example, if a customer wants to understand how a product works for their skin type, they can easily find a beauty influencer with a similar skin type who provides reviews or tutorials, making it simpler to access relevant information before making a purchase decision. Thus, the below hypothesis is put forward. H2: Beauty influencer has a positive influence to purchase intention. H3: Beauty

RESEARCH ARTICLE

influencer has a positive influence to social media engagement. Because of the rising prevalence of social media, purchasing behavior has changed significantly (Aleksijevits, 2019). The use of social media is a basic need that leads to the purchase intention of different items (e.g. beauty products) (Tang *et al.*, 2020). According to Sokolova and Kefi (2020), there is a positive and significant relationship between social media influencer and purchasing intention for beauty cosmetics. Beauty influencers have also become pivotal figures in digital marketing, using their large social media followings to influence consumer behavior (Gelati & Verplancke, 2022). They are often seen as relatable and authentic, which makes them different from traditional celebrities. This authenticity can build trust, which is a crucial factor in driving purchase intention (Bui *et al.*, 2021). Social media platforms provide beauty influencers with a space to share personalized recommendations, product reviews, and demonstrations (Yusiana *et al.*, 2023). Studies show that these activites can shape how consumers view brands and products, increasing their likelihood of purchase (Lou & Yuan, 2019).

Social media engagement also plays a key role in how beauty influencers affect purchase intention. Beauty influencers use their social media platforms to create meaningful interactions with their followers through likes, comments, and shared content, which helps build trust and authenticity (Dewi & Sari, 2023). This engagement strengthens the connection between the influencer and their audience, making followers more likely to trust their product recommendations and consider purchasing (Casalo *et al.*, 2020). In this way, social media engagement acts as a mediator by enhancing the influencer's persuasive power (Galdon *et al.*, 2024). Thus, the study would like to explore this relationship. Based on the prior research path, the following hypothesis is proposed. H4: Social Media Engagement mediates the relationship between beauty influencer and purchase intention.
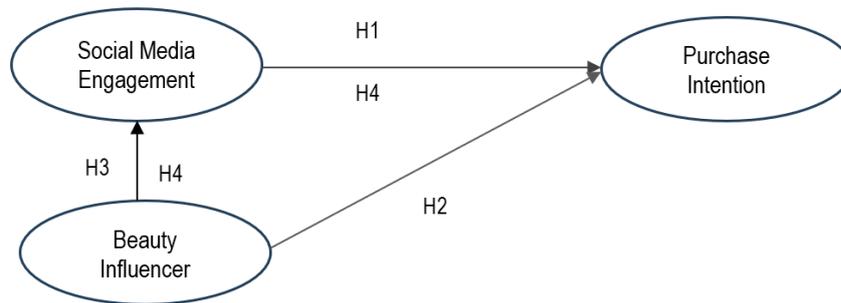


Figure 1. Research Framework

## 2. Methodology

This study applies quantitative approach, structural equation modeling, to analyze data. The research measurements for this research were developed from previous studies (Galdón *et al.*, 2024; Dachyar, & Banjarnahor, 2017; Gonzalez-Serrano *et al.*, 2024). Table 1 presents all indicators of all research constructs. Purposive sampling was employed as the sampling technique. The respondents selected for this study were customers of Indonesian local beauty products and followed Indonesian beauty influencers on social media. A likert scale of five points, ranging from 1 to 5, was used to grade the questionnaire items. Strong disagreement to strong agreement is how indicators of each variable were evaluated. To ensure the true sample of this study, a set of screening questions was included in the questionnaire. This question directly asked respondents how often they purchased local beauty products and whether they followed Indonesian beauty influencers on social media. This approach enabled the collection of data from genuine users of local beauty products and followers of Indonesian beauty influencers on social media. The questionnaire was distributed to the target audience via an online survey platform (e.g., Google Forms), allowing respondents to complete it conveniently and voluntarily. Data collection was done in November 2024 for 2 (two weeks) and a total of 104 completed surveys were successfully collected.

**RESEARCH ARTICLE**

Table 1. Research Measurements

| Construct | Item | Indicator | Authors |
|---|---|---|---|
| Beauty Influencers (BI) | BI1 | The influencer I follow is attractive | Galdón, Gil-Pechuán, |
| | BI2 | The influencer I follow is trustworthy | AlFraihat, Tarabieh, |
| | BI3 | The influencer I follow is knowledgeable | (2024) |
| | BI4 | The influencer I follow is reliable | |
| | BI5 | The influencer I follow is expert in the field | |
| Customer Purchase Intentions (CPI) | CPI1 | I am likely to buy Indonesian local beauty products | Dachyar & Banjarnahor, |
| | CPI3 | I intend to recommend Indonesian local beauty products over other brands | (2017) |
| | CPI3 | I usually prioritize Indonesian local beauty brands over other brands | |
| | CPI4 | It is likely that i will purchase Indonesian local beauty products in the future | |
| | CPI5 | I am likely to buy local beauty products recommended by beauty influencers on social media | |
| Social Media Engagement (SME) | SME1 | I like to browse social media to gather information about Indonesian local beauty products | Gonzalez-Serrano, Dos-Santos, Crespo-Hervas & Calabuig (2024) |
| | SME2 | I follow regular updates and new product releases of Indonesian local beauty brands on social media | |
| | SME3 | I find social media communities useful for discovering about Indonesian local beauty products | |
| | SME4 | I enjoy discussing and exchanging information about Indonesian beauty products with others on social media | |
| | SME5 | I am interested in receiving updates and communications from Indonesian local beauty brands via social media | |

## 3. Results and Discussion

### 3.1 Results

Data analysis was done using software -Smart PLS- to assess measurement and structural model. Table 2 depicts the results of measurement model assessment. First, the indicator loadings (outer loadings) of each item is higher than 0.7 (Hair, Risher, Sarstedt & Ringle, 2019), except for items BI5, CPI5 and SME3. However, as average variance extracted (AVE) for all items on each construct is higher than 0.5, then items less than 0.7 do not have to be eliminated (Hair *et al*., 2019). With AVE value higher than 0.5, this indicates that convergent validity is established. Furthermore, discriminant validity was also

**RESEARCH ARTICLE**

assessed using HTMT value. Table 3 shows that the HTMT values are less than 0.9 and this indicates that discriminant validity is established. The reliability – Cronbach's α, ρ A and composite reliability of all constructs are higher than 0.7.

Table 2. Validity and Reliability

| Construct | Items | Outer Loadings | Cronbach's Alpha | rho_A | Composite Reliability | AVE | VIF |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Beauty Influencer | BI1 | 0.802 | 0.889 | 0.902 | 0.920 | 0.698 | 2.213 |
| | BI2 | 0.859 | | | | | 2.669 |
| | BI3 | 0.876 | | | | | 3.037 |
| | BI4 | 0.929 | | | | | 4.338 |
| | BI5 | 0.692 | | | | | 0.692 |
| Customer Purchase Intention | CPI1 | 0.808 | 0.834 | 0.836 | 0.883 | 0.603 | 2.525 |
| | CPI2 | 0.797 | | | | | 2.509 |
| | CPI3 | 0.763 | | | | | 2.229 |
| | CPI4 | 0.835 | | | | | 2.441 |
| | CPI5 | 0.670 | | | | | 1.277 |
| Social Media Engagement | SME1 | 0.783 | 0.824 | 0.825 | 0.877 | 0.588 | 1.725 |
| | SME2 | 0.774 | | | | | 1.985 |
| | SME3 | 0.676 | | | | | 1.362 |
| | SME4 | 0.764 | | | | | 1.756 |
| | SME5 | 0.830 | | | | | 2.160 |

Table 3. Discriminant Validity Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT)

| Construct | Beauty Influencer | Purchase Intention | Social Media Engagement |
|---|---|---|---|
| Beauty influencer | | | |
| Purchase Intention | 0.550 | - | |
| Social Media Engagement | 0.630 | 0.645 | - |

Table 4 depicts the repondents' profiles. The majority of participants were aged 18–24 years (88.5%).In terms of gender distribution, most respondents were female (85.6%). Regarding employment status, the largest proportion of respondents were students (82.7%). The social media usage patterns revealed that 94.2% of respondents used social media daily. In examining purchasing behaviours related to local beauty products, 39.4% of respondents indicated purchasing such products every 2–3 months and 27.9% purchased them once a month.

Table 4. Demography of the Respondents

| Variable/Dimensions | Frequencies | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Gender | | |
| Male | 15 | 14.4% |
| Female | 89 | 85.6% |
| Age | | |
| Under 18 | 1 | 1% |
| 18-24 | 92 | 88.5% |
| 25-34 | 10 | 9.6% |
| 45 and above | 1 | 1% |
| Occupation | | |
| Student | 86 | 82.7% |
| Employed | 16 | 15.4% |

**RESEARCH ARTICLE**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Unemployed | 2 | 1.9% |
| Social Media Platform Usage | | |
| Daily | 98 | 94.2% |
| Several times a week | 5 | 4.8% |
| Rarely | 1 | 1% |
| Local Beauty Product Purchase Usage | | |
| Once a month | 29 | 27.9% |
| Every 2-3 months | 41 | 29.4% |
| Every 4-6 months | 20 | 19.2% |
| Less frequently | 14 | 13.5% |

Table 5. R-Square

| Construct | R Square | Adjusted R Square |
|---|---|---|
| Purchase Intention | 0.345 | 0.332 |
| Social Media Engagement | 0.299 | 0.292 |

The R-Square values in Table 5 reveal that the independent variables explain 34.5% of the variance in Purchase Intention and 29.9% of the variance in Social Media Engagement, indicating moderate explanatory power. These findings suggest that while Beauty Influencers and Social Media Engagement significantly impact Purchase Intention, additional factors not included in the model may account for the remaining unexplained variance.
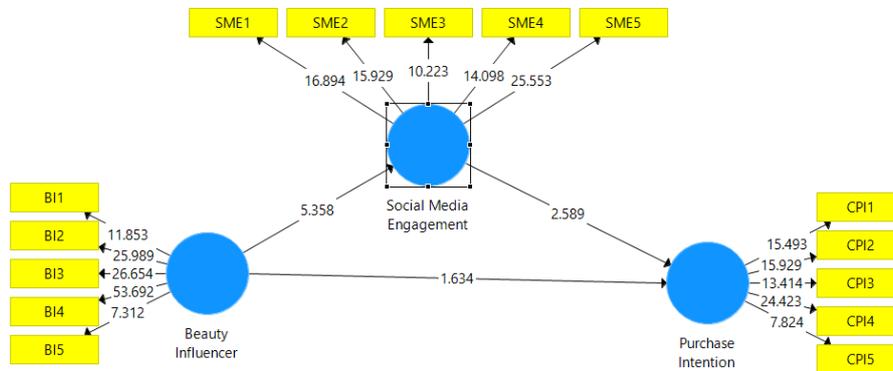


Figure 2. Path Analysis

Tabel 6. Hypothesis Assesment Results

| Hypothesis | Original Sample | Sample Mean | Standard Deviation | t-statistics | P Values |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| H1 Social Media Engagement → Purchase Intention | 0.401 | 0.398 | 0.155 | 2.589 | 0.011 |
| H2 Beauty Influencer → Purchase Intention | 0.262 | 0.281 | 0.161 | 1.634 | 0.105 |
| H3 Beauty Influencer → Social Media Engagement | 0.547 | 0.557 | 0.102 | 5.358 | 0.000 |
| H4 Beauty Influencer → Social Media Engagement → Purchase Intention | 0.219 | 0.213 | 0.076 | 2.870 | 0.005 |

RESEARCH ARTICLE

### 3.2 Discussion

The findings of the study reveal a positive association between social media engagement and purchase intentions (H1), aligning with the conclusions of prior research by Sokolava and Kefi (2020) as well as Kay *et al*. (2020). This suggests that social media engagement has played a significant role in increasing people's interest in buying local beauty products. This study further validates the strong and positive connection between beauty influencers and social media engagement (H2), consistent with the previous findings from Alika *et al*. (2024). It suggests that beauty influencers are key contributors to fostering active participation on social media platforms. The findings of this study reveal that the relationship between beauty influencers and purchase intention is indirect. This indicates that beauty influencers do not have a direct positive impact on consumers' purchase intentions, which is in agreement with the previous findings by Hasan and Hasvia (2023). However, the study identifies that social media engagement serves as a mediating factor in this relationship, meaning that beauty influencers influence purchase intentions through their ability to enhance social media engagement. The pathway from Beauty Influencers to Social Media Engagement and subsequently to Purchase Intention demonstrates how influencer's activities on social media indirectly influence consumers' purchasing decisions by increasing their engagement levels on the platforms. This finding highlights the critical role of social media engagement as a bridge between influencer presence and consumer purchasing behaviour.

## 4. Conclusion

In conclusion, this study examines how social media engagement and beauty influencers affect the purchase intentions of Indonesian local beauty products. The results show that beauty influencers do not directly impact purchase intentions but significantly increase social media engagement, which positively influences purchasing decisions. This highlights the role of social media engagement as a bridge between beauty influencers and consumer behavior. The results of this research offer valuable implications for marketers and local beauty brands. First, brands should invest in collaborative partnerships with trusted beauty influencers to build credibility and enhance consumer trust. Influencers with expertise and relatability are instrumental in driving product awareness and purchase decisions. Second, local beauty brands must actively engage their audience on social media through strategies such as interactive content, timely responses to queries, and user-generated campaigns. These efforts can boost consumer interaction and loyalty, ultimately translating into increased purchase intentions. Lastly, leveraging social media platforms to highlight product quality, unique selling points, and consumer reviews can enhance the brand's competitive edge in a market heavily dominated by global beauty companies.

Despite its contributions, this study has certain limitations. First, the sample is predominantly composed of young female consumers aged 18–24, which may not fully represent the diverse demographic of beauty product users in Indonesia. Future research should consider a broader demographic range to generalize the findings more effectively. Second, the study relies on self-reported data, which may be influenced by social desirability bias. Longitudinal studies or experiments could provide deeper insights into actual consumer behaviors over time. Lastly, the research focuses solely on Indonesian local beauty products, limiting its applicability to other industries or international contexts. Expanding the scope to include global brands or different product categories could provide a more comprehensive understanding of social media engagement and influencer marketing strategies.

**RESEARCH ARTICLE**

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