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## **The Influence of Influencer Credibility, Brand Image, and Ad Relevance on Purchase Intent for Beauty Products (A Study of Somethinc Product Promotions Via Influencer Tasya Farasya)**

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### **Keywords:**

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### **Abstract**

Influencer marketing has become a dominant strategy in digital beauty brand promotion, yet the relative contribution of influencer credibility, brand image, and ad relevance to consumer purchase intention remains underexplored, particularly when these constructs are examined simultaneously within a single framework. This study investigates the partial and simultaneous effects of these three variables on purchase intention, using the collaboration between Indonesian beauty brand Somethinc and influencer Tasya Farasya on TikTok and Instagram as its empirical context. A quantitative explanatory approach was employed, with data collected from active social media users in Surabaya selected through purposive sampling and analyzed using multiple linear regression with SPSS. The findings reveal that brand image and ad relevance each exert a significant positive effect on purchase intention, while influencer credibility does not demonstrate a meaningful direct effect when considered independently. Simultaneously, all three variables together account for a substantial proportion of the variance in consumer purchase intention, confirming the significance of the integrated model. These results suggest that marketers should prioritize building a strong, consistent brand image and delivering contextually relevant content, rather than relying primarily on influencer popularity. This study contributes to the literature by integrating three constructs previously studied in isolation into a more comprehensive conceptual framework applicable to social media influencer marketing in Indonesia.

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The rapid development of social media has encouraged the birth of influencer marketing practices as one of the dominant digital marketing strategies. Active social media users in Indonesia reach 139 million people or equivalent to 49.9% of the total population, making Indonesia one of the largest digital markets in Southeast Asia (We Are Social and DataReportal, 2024). Various previous studies have noted the wide penetration of social media in Indonesia as a strategic foundation for brands that want to reach consumers directly and personally. Platforms such as Instagram and TikTok have become the main platforms for beauty product endorsement activities in Indonesia, given the high user engagement on these platforms (Sari et al., 2024). The large user base of Indonesian social media also encourages local brands to rely on influencers as the spearhead of their marketing communications (Kristaung et al., 2024). Indonesian consumers themselves have proven to be active in responding to promotional

content from influencers they follow on social media, thus making influencer marketing a strategic and measurable instrument (Salsabillah et al., 2025).

However, this growth is not free from challenges. Consumers' growing skepticism towards promotional content makes it difficult for companies to attract and influence consumers effectively (Leung et al., 2022). In fact, it was found that influencer marketing does not always affect purchasing behavior, especially when the influencer credibility dimension is not strong enough to build consumer trust (Mahendra and Edastama, 2022). This condition indicates that the effectiveness of influencer marketing is not solely determined by the reach or popularity of the influencer, but rather depends on more complex factors such as the credibility of the influencer, the brand image being promoted, and the relevance of the advertising content in the eyes of consumers.

One concrete example of the implementation of this strategy can be observed in the collaboration between local cosmetics brand Somethinc and beauty influencer Tasya Farasya. Tasya Farasya is known to the public through honest and informative beauty product reviews on Instagram. The use of the Tasya Farasya Approved label in Somethinc's product catalog reflects an influencer endorsement-based marketing strategy to increase consumer trust (Sari et al., 2024). The endorsement has been proven to have a very strong and positive effect on brand awareness of Somethinc Calm Down Cream products (Sari et al., 2024), and indicates a very strong relationship between Tasya Farasya's influence and the purchase decision of Somethinc Calm Down products (Kristaung et al., 2024). However, these findings are not always consistent, the relationship between celebrity endorsement Tasya Farasya and the interest in buying Somethinc products under certain conditions is relatively weak, although it still shows a positive direction (Rahail et al., 2020). This contradiction shows that the effectiveness of an influencer does not stand alone, but rather is influenced by other, more complex factors.

Based on the above phenomenon, at least three key concepts can be identified as determinants of consumer buying interest: influencer credibility, brand image, and advertising relevance. Influencer credibility includes the dimensions of expertise, trustworthiness, and attractiveness that have been proven to influence the way consumers process promotional messages (Ohanian, 1990). The positive and significant influence of endorsements on consumer purchasing decisions of beauty products is found in the context of Somethinc in Surabaya, where the brand image formed through influencer activities contributes significantly to the increase in interest (Yasinta & Nainggolan, 2023). The simultaneous effect of Tasya Farasya Approved labeling even reached 66% on consumer buying interest (Salsabillah et al., 2025). On the other hand, the relevance of ads plays a role in filtering the attention of increasingly selective digital consumers - ads perceived to suit consumers' needs and lifestyles have been shown to increase engagement and buying interest, as shown in a study (Salsabillah et al 2025) on celebrity endorsements and Somethinc product reviews on TikTok. Thus, these three variables together form a relevant framework to understand consumer buying interest in the context of influencer marketing on social media.

Although there have been quite a lot of studies that have examined each of the above variables, studies that test the influence of influencer credibility, brand image, and advertising relevance simultaneously on buying interest are still very limited. Most previous studies have tended to test these variables separately or only combine the two. Endorsement and brand

image were examined together without including the relevance dimension of Yasinta & Nainggolan (2023) ads. The influence of influencers on purchasing decisions has also been studied independently without considering the perception of content relevance (Kristaung et al., 2024). On the other hand, the relationship between endorsement and brand awareness has also been tested without integrating the three variables at once (Sari et al., 2024). In fact, in digital marketing practice, these three factors work simultaneously in the minds of consumers when they are exposed to promotional content. Understanding how these three variables interact and contribute simultaneously will provide a more complete picture for marketers in designing more effective and efficient influencer marketing strategies, especially for the Indonesian market.

Based on the description above, this study aims to examine the influence of influencer credibility, brand image, and advertising relevance on consumer buying interest, both partially and simultaneously, in the context of marketing Somethinc products through influencer Tasya Farasya on Indonesian social media. Theoretically, this research contributes to integrating three constructs that have often been studied separately into a single more comprehensive conceptual framework – expanding Ohanian's (1990) credibility model by including the dimensions of brand image and advertising relevance. Managerially, the findings of this study are expected to provide practical guidance for local brands in choosing and optimizing collaborations with influencers, so that investment in influencer marketing can produce a measurable impact on consumer buying interest, especially in Indonesia's ever-growing social media ecosystem, as reflected in various empirical studies that have been conducted in the Indonesian context.

Influencer credibility is the audience's perception of the extent to which an influencer is trusted as a reliable source of information. Ohanian (1990) stated that the credibility of an endorser consists of three main dimensions: expertise, trustworthiness, and attractiveness. Expertise refers to the ability of influencers to provide information or recommendations that are considered correct and relevant. Trust reflects the integrity and honesty of the influencer in promoting a product. Attractiveness includes the ability of influencers to attract attention and create a positive impression.

In the context of social media, the credibility of influencers is not solely determined by appearance or communication skills, but also by the consistency of behavior shown, both in the personal and professional realms. Overall, the existing literature shows a consensus that the dimensions of influencer credibility do not work equally in influencing consumer buying interest. Rahmawati and Restuti (2022) and Saputra and Dewi (2023) both found a positive influence of credibility on buying interest in Indonesian beauty product consumers, but both emphasized different dimensions as the most dominant factor (Rahmawati and Restuti. 2022) pointing to the *trustworthiness* dimension as the strongest, while Saputra and Dewi (2023) actually found expertise) that are specific and relevant to the product as the main determinant. These differences in findings are not contradictions, but rather reflect that the weight of each dimension of credibility depends on the context of the product and platform being studied. The common thread of the two studies is that the influence of credibility on buying interest is not direct and singular, but is conditioned by contextual factors such as the suitability between influencer competence and product category. This is in line with the findings of the meta-analysis of Sotgiu et al. (2024) who assert that the effectiveness of influencer credibility varies greatly depending on the characteristics of the audience, platform, and type of product, so it

cannot be universally generalized. These findings collectively indicate that the effectiveness of influencer credibility is contextual and cannot be universally generalized, but rather depends on the characteristics of the audience, platform, and product category being studied.

Brand image is a comprehensive picture in the minds of consumers regarding a brand, including associations, impressions, and beliefs formed through direct experience and promotional exposure. Keller (1993) explained that brand image consists of brand associations stored in the consumer's memory, which influences the evaluation of products.

Brand image acts as a bridge between marketing messages and consumer perception. If a brand has a positive image, influencer cooperation will be easier to accept. Conversely, if the brand image is negative or weak, promotional messages may be less effective even if they are done by credible influencers.

Various studies state that brand image has a positive and significant relationship with buying interest. Consumers tend to choose brands whose associations match their values, preferences, and lifestyle.

As a representation of consumer perception, *brand image* is formed from the accumulation of information and past experiences related to a brand, which then affects the level of consumer trust in the brand (Pradana, 2017). The process of forming it involves the interpretation of various elements, including product attributes, benefits offered, usage situations, user characteristics, and the image of the marketer or the personality of the producer (Firmansyah, 2018).

The mediated role of *brand image* in the relationship between digital promotion and purchase decisions shows that the effectiveness of promotion does not only depend on exposure, but also on the formation of brand perception (Kusuma & Putri, 2021). In this context, continuous exposure to influencer content results in a stronger brand image and has an impact on increased buying interest compared to conventional advertising.

Ad relevance is the consumer's perception that the ad content relates to their needs, interests, or life situations. Li and Leckenby (2007) define advertising relevance as the suitability between promotional messages and consumer characteristics. In the context of social media, relevant content is considered more personal, engaging, and valuable.

The relevance of ads is increasingly important because digital consumers tend to avoid ads that are perceived as intrusive or inappropriate. Previous research has shown that content relevance can increase attention, engagement, and buying interest. When an ad is considered relevant, consumers feel that the content provides the benefit or information they need.

According to Zhu & Chang (2016), the relevance of ads reflects the extent to which consumers perceive personalized ads as something that fits their lives. If an advertisement is considered to be in accordance with the consumer's personal preferences, then the likelihood of consumers being interested in something being promoted will be greater (Alalwan, 2018). Alalwan's research (2018) revealed that users who thought the ads displayed were relevant to their needs had higher purchase interest.

Widodo and Kurniawati (2020) explained that in the Indonesian social media ecosystem, the level of relevance of ads perceived by consumers is influenced by how accurate the platform's algorithm is in matching promotional content to user profiles and behavior. The study also found that ads that were perceived to be relevant significantly lowered ad avoidance

behavior, thereby increasing the likelihood of consumers processing ad messages more deeply and ultimately driving the formation of buying interest.

Bang, Kim, and Choi (2018) stated that the higher the level of relevance of advertising to consumer conditions and needs, the lower the perceived level of perceived goal impediment. On the other hand, ads that are too prominent (salience) can actually increase the perception of obstacles to consumer goals. In addition, the involvement of influencers in various controversial cases has the potential to lower their level of credibility. However, the existence of a loyal follower base causes the impact of such credibility decline is not always the same, but can vary depending on the context and characteristics of the audience.

Buying interest is the tendency of consumers to buy a product after going through a process of evaluation and positive perception of the product. Engel, Blackwell, and Miniard (1995) stated that buying interest is one of the indicators of behavioral intent in consumer behavior theory. Buying interest can be influenced by psychological, social, or marketing stimuli such as advertising, promotions, or consumer experience.

In digital marketing research, buying interest is often used to measure the extent to which social media content influences purchasing decisions. High buying interest indicates that consumers are willing to move to the product evaluation stage or purchase decision.

Buying interest and intention to buy online are two interrelated concepts. Buying interest, according to the definition conveyed by Wu (2011) refers to the potential of consumers to plan or be willing to buy something in the future, while Peña García (2020) states that online buying intent is the extent to which customers are willing to buy a product through e-commerce. Previous research by Murjiati (2022) revealed that advertising can affect consumers' buying interest in the goods or services offered.

Based on the literature review above, the relationship between variables can be explained as follows:

The effectiveness of communication carried out by influencers has an important role in building credibility in the eyes of the audience. Influencer credibility shapes consumer perception of the quality and validity of the information conveyed. According to Masuda et al. (2022), credibility is related to the extent to which communicators are perceived to have trust and reliability in conveying messages. Wang et al. (2017) explain that an influencer's credibility includes the level of trust, attractiveness and reliability that affects the quality of information received by his or her followers.

Credible influencers are able to create a positive consumer response to brand promotion, so credibility is a key factor in the use of influencers as a marketing medium. The personal characteristics of influencers, such as expertise and reputation, are the main considerations for brands in establishing promotional cooperation. Consumers tend to receive recommendations more when the influencer has a suitability with a field of expertise relevant to the product being promoted (Hall, 2016).

Influencers' expertise contributes to increasing public recognition, which ultimately strengthens credibility (Schouten et al., 2021). In addition, influencer attraction and trust act as a persuasive factor in encouraging consumers to act. Referring to the credibility model developed by Ohanian (1990) and adapted in the research of Yılmazdoğan et al. (2021), influencer credibility consists of three main dimensions, namely appeal, expertise, and trust, which together affect consumer buying interest.

***H1: Influencer credibility has a positive and significant effect on consumer buying interest in Somethinc beauty products on social media.***

### **The Influence of Brand Image on Buying Interest**

Brand image is one of the important factors that influence consumer behavior in purchasing decision-making. Research conducted by Rizan et al. (2015) shows that brand image has a positive and significant influence on purchase decisions, which indicates that the stronger the consumer's perception of a brand, the higher the consumer's tendency to make a purchase.

Similar results were also found in the research of Djatmiko and Pradana (2016), who stated that brand image plays a role in increasing consumer attractiveness to products, especially in technology products. Consistently, various previous studies confirm that brand image makes a significant contribution to interest and purchasing decisions in various product categories.

In the context of e-commerce in Indonesia, brand image has also proven to play a significant role as a significant mediator between digital promotional activities and purchase decisions, where consumers who are consistently exposed to influencer content tend to form a stronger brand image (Kusuma & Putri, 2021). Research on beauty product consumers in Surabaya also found that influencer marketing had a significant effect on Somethinc purchase decisions through brand image as a mediating variable (Yasinta & Nainggolan, 2023). In addition, brand image formed through influencer activities has been proven to contribute significantly to consumer purchasing decisions for local beauty products in Indonesia (Yasinta & Nainggolan, 2023).

However, not all studies show a consistently positive relationship. Under certain conditions, a brand image that is already very strong can actually create too high expectations for consumers, so that if the real experience does not match the perception of the image formed through influencer promotion, this can reduce buying interest and even cause cognitive dissonance. This shows that brand image management is not enough to rely only on influencer-based marketing communication strategies, but must also be aligned with product quality and the actual consumer experience.

A positive brand image creates consumer trust and confidence in product quality, thereby driving higher buying interest. Thus, a strong brand image becomes a strategic asset for companies in influencing consumer behavior.

***H2: Brand image has a positive and significant effect on consumer buying interest in Somethinc beauty products on social media.***

### **The Effect of Ad Relevance on Buying Interest**

Ad relevance has an important role in determining the effectiveness of marketing communications as well as consumer buying interest. Relevant ads are able to increase consumer engagement because the content is presented according to the needs, interests and context of the audience. (Widodo & Kurniawati, 2020; Kim & Huh, 2017) stated that a high level of advertising relevance can increase consumers' positive perception of brands while reducing ad avoidance tendencies.

In addition, ad personalization and contextual suitability are key elements in creating relevant and effective ads. Research by Nur Baiti & Febriyanti, (2021). And Wibowo et al., (2025) show that the relevance of content is able to strengthen the relationship between

consumers and brands. With relevant content strategies, marketers can optimize consumer engagement, increase brand loyalty as well as drive purchase decisions (Yana et al., 2025). However, there are findings that suggest a more complex relationship. Bang, Kim, and Choi (2018) stated that ads that are too prominent (ad salience) can actually increase perceived goal impediment, which is the perception of consumers that ads interfere with their goals, thus potentially reducing buying interest even though the content is actually relevant. These findings indicate that the relevance of advertising has an optimal limit: beyond these limits, content that appears too often or is too personal can be perceived as a privacy intrusion that triggers negative attitudes towards advertising (Kim & Huh, 2017). As such, the relevance of advertising is not absolutely linear, but rather moderated by factors such as the frequency of exposure and the sensitivity of consumer privacy.

***H3: The relevance of advertising has a positive and significant effect on consumer buying interest in Somethinc beauty products on social media.***

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

### **Research Design**

This study consciously uses the multiple linear regression approach as a methodological choice that is proportional to the research objectives. Referring to Hair et al. (2019), the selection of analysis techniques must be adjusted to the research objectives and the stage of literature development on the topic being studied. Given that this study is an initial exploratory-confirmatory study that tests the direct influence of three constructs that have never been tested simultaneously in one model in the context of Somethinc-Tasya Farasya, the use of multiple linear regression is appropriate and adequate. This design was chosen because the study aims to test the hypothesis regarding the influence of influencer credibility (X1), brand image (X2), and advertising relevance (X3) on consumer buying interest (Y) on social media. The data collection instrument is a questionnaire with a Likert scale of 1 to 5, which is distributed online through the Google Forms platform.

### **Population and Sample**

The population in this study is active social media users in the Surabaya area who know Somethinc products. Given that the population number could not be identified with certainty due to the open and dynamic nature of social media, the questionnaire was widely distributed to 214 social media users.

Of the 214 questionnaires distributed, all respondents first passed the screening questions at the beginning of the questionnaire, namely confirmation of whether they knew and had followed Tasya Farasya's content on social media. Respondents who answered no to this question were automatically stopped and could not continue filling out the questionnaire, so their data was not included in the analysis. This screening mechanism aims to ensure that only respondents are truly relevant to the context of the research whose data are processed. Of the total, 136 respondents were declared valid because they met all purposive sampling criteria, namely: (1) actively using Instagram or TikTok for at least one hour per day, (2) knowing and having followed Tasya Farasya's content on social media, (3) knowing Somethinc products, and passing the data feasibility test. This number has also met the guidelines of Hair et al. which recommend 5 to 10 times the number of research indicators, where with 17 indicators,

the minimum sample required is 85 respondents and the ideal maximum is 170 respondents, so that 136 respondents are declared adequate and become the unit of analysis in this study.

The selection of Surabaya as the location of the research was based on several strategic considerations. First, Surabaya is the second largest metropolitan city in Indonesia with a significant penetration rate of TikTok and Instagram use among the younger generation, making it a very relevant market in the context of influencer marketing content consumption (Citra Amalia & Sagita Putri, 2021). Second, the market share of local beauty products such as Somethinc is proven to have a strong consumer base in Surabaya, as shown by Yasinta & Nainggolan (2023) research that specifically examined Somethinc consumers in Surabaya and found a significant influence of influencer marketing on purchase decisions. Third, the demographic characteristics of respondents in Surabaya, which are dominated by students and students aged 17-25 years, are in accordance with the target population of this study, namely consumers who actively consume promotional content from influencers on social media. Thus, Surabaya represents the context of the Indonesian urban market that is relevant to examine the phenomenon of influencer marketing in the local beauty product category.

### Research Instruments

**Table of Variable Measurement Instruments**

Variable	Dimension	Statement Items
<i>Influencer Credibility</i> (Ohanian, 1990; Hussain & Ali, 2021)	Expertise	The influencer can explain the product clearly.
		The influencer understands the product they promote.
	Trustworthines s	The influencer is honest in conveying product information.
		The influencer is reliable in providing recommendations.
		The influencer communicates the product naturally and authentically.
	Attractiveness	The influencer appears attractive when promoting the product.
The influencer explains the product with elegance.		
<i>Brand Image</i> (Keller, 1993)	Functional	This brand has reliable products.
	Experiential	Using this brand's products is satisfying.
		This brand's products are comfortable and easy to use.
Symbolic	Using this brand's products makes me more confident.	
<i>Ad Relevance</i> (Jung, 2017; Celsi and Olson, 1988)	Personal Need	The information in this ad aligns with my personal needs.
	Personal Value	The information in this ad aligns with my personal values.

<i>Purchase Intention</i> (Sanita, 2019)	Transactional Intent	I want to buy this brand's product.
	Referential Intent	I am willing to recommend this brand's product to others.
	Preferential Intention	This brand's product is my top choice.
	Explorative Intention	I am interested in seeking more information about this brand's product.

### Data Collection and Analysis Techniques

Data was collected through an online questionnaire that was distributed to active social media users in the Surabaya area. Variables were measured using a Likert scale with a range of 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). Data analysis was carried out using SPSS software with the following stages:

1. **Validity Test:** using Pearson Product Moment correlation, with the criteria  $r$  calculated  $> r$  table (**0.168 for  $n=136$ , significance 5%**).
2. **Reliability Test:** using Cronbach's Alpha, with a minimum value of 0.60 as a reliability indicator.
3. **Classical Assumption Test:** includes normality test (Kolmogorov-Smirnov), multicollinearity test (Variance Inflation Factor / VIF), and heteroscedasticity test (Scatterplot/Glejser).
4. **Multiple Linear Regression Analysis:** to test the simultaneous and partial influence of independent variables on dependent variables.
5. **Hypothesis test:** using a t-test (partial), an F-test (simultaneous), and a coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ).

Multiple linear regression was used to test the simultaneous and partial effects of the independent variables on the dependent variable. The regression model is specified as follows: The multiple linear regression model used in this study is specified as follows:

$$Y = 0.297 + 0.721X_3 + 0.531X_2 + 0.019X_1 \quad (\text{Eq. 1})$$

where  $Y$  = purchase intention,  $X_1$  = influencer credibility,  $X_2$  = brand image,  $X_3$  = ad relevance, and the coefficients represent the estimated effect of each independent variable on purchase intention.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Characteristics of Respondents

Data collection was carried out on 136 respondents who met the purposive sampling criteria, namely active TikTok or Instagram users for at least one hour per day and had seen influencer promotional content in the last six months. The demographic picture of respondents is presented in Table 1 below.

**Table 1. Respondent Characteristics**

Respondent Identity	Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Female	89	65.4%

	Male	47	34.6%
Age	18–20 years	65	47.8%
	21–25 years	55	40.4%
	26–30 years	9	6.6%
	< 17 years	4	2.9%
	> 30 years	3	2.2%
Last Education	Senior High School	80	58.8%
	Bachelor's Degree	46	33.8%
	Diploma	7	5.1%
	Junior High School	2	1.5%
	Elementary School	1	0.7%
Occupation	Student / University Student	97	71.3%
	Private Employee	20	14.7%
	Entrepreneur	7	5.1%
	Freelancer	6	4.4%
	Others	6	4.4%
Most Used Social Media	TikTok	108	79.4%
	Posted on Instagram	108	79.4%
	X (Twitter)	14	10.3%

Source: Primary Data, 2025 (n=136)

Based on Table 1, the majority of respondents are female (65.4%), which is in line with the characteristics of beauty product consumers in Indonesia which are generally dominated by women. Judging from age, the 18-20 year old group is the largest (47.8%), followed by the 21-25 year old group (40.4%), so that overall more than 88% of respondents are included in the category of generation Z and young millennials. This condition is relevant to the context of the study because this age group is the most active user of TikTok and Instagram in Indonesia. In terms of work, students and college students dominate with a proportion of 71.3%, which indicates that most respondents are still in the phase of forming brand preferences that are heavily influenced by social media content. The most frequently used social media is TikTok and Instagram, each with 108 respondents (79.4%), which is the main platform for influencer marketing content distribution in this study.

#### Validity Test

The validity test was performed using *the Pearson Product Moment correlation method*. The instrument is declared valid if the value  $r$  is calculated  $> r$  of the table. With  $n = 136$  and a significance level of 5% (bidirectional test), the  $r$ -value of the table used was **0.168**. The results of the validity test of all variables are presented in Table 2.

**Table 2. Validity Test Results**

Influencer Credibility (X1)	KI1	0.647	0.168
	KI2	0.647	0.168
	KI3	0.752	0.168
	KI4	0.701	0.168
	KI5	0.789	0.168
	KI6	0.589	0.168
	KI7	0.722	0.168
Brand Image (X2)	CB1	0.800	0.168
	CB2	0.864	0.168
	CB3	0.798	0.168
	CB4	0.843	0.168
Ad Relevance (X3)	RI1	0.914	0.168
	RI2	0.911	0.168
Purchase Intention (Y)	MB1	0.840	0.168
	MB2	0.797	0.168
	MB3	0.809	0.168
	MB4	0.747	0.168

*Source: SPSS Data Processing Results, 2025*

Based on Table 2, all indicators of the four study variables had a calculated r-value greater than the r-table (0.168), with a range of r-calculated values ranging from 0.589 to 0.914. Thus, all statement items in the questionnaire were declared valid and suitable for use as an instrument for data collection for this study.

### **Reliability Test**

The reliability test was carried out using *Cronbach's Alpha coefficient*. The instrument is declared reliable if Cronbach's Alpha value  $\geq 0.60$ . The test results are presented in Table 3.

**Table 3. Reliability Test Results**

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Standard
Influencer Credibility (X1)	0.820	0.60
Brand Image (X2)	0.844	0.60
Ad Relevance (X3)	0.799	0.60
Purchase Intention (Y)	0.809	0.60

*Source: SPSS Data Processing Results, 2025*

Based on Table 3, the Cronbach's Alpha value of the entire variable ranges from 0.799 to 0.844. All values are above the minimum standard of 0.60, so that all research instruments are declared reliable. Although the Ad Relevance reliability value (0.799) is slightly below 0.80, it still meets the minimum requirements and is acceptable in social research. With the fulfillment of the validity and reliability test, this research instrument is considered consistent and reliable in measuring the construct being studied.

**Classical Assumption Test**

**Normality Test**

The normality test was carried out using the *Kolmogorov-Smirnov One-Sample method*. Residual data is declared to be normally distributed if the value of Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) > 0.05. The test results are presented in Table 4.

**Table 4. Normality Test Results (One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov)**

Remarks	Value
N	136
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z	0,061
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	0,200
Monte Carlo Sig.	0,239
Remarks	Normally Distributed Data

*Source: SPSS Data Processing Results, 2025*

Asymp value. Sig. (2-tailed) of 0.200 > 0.05 and Monte Carlo Sig. of 0.239 > 0.05 indicate that the residual regression model is normally distributed. Thus, the assumption of normality is fulfilled and the regression model can be used for further inferential analysis.

**Multicollinearity Test**

The multicollinearity test was carried out through *the value of Tolerance and Variance Inflation Factor (VIF)*. The model is free from multicollinearity if the Tolerance value is > 0.10 and the VIF is < 10.00. The test results are presented in Table 5.

**Table 5. Multicollinearity Test Results**

Variable	Tolerance	VIVID	Remarks
Influencer Credibility (X1)	0,606	1,650	No Multicollinearity Occurs
Brand Image (X2)	0,640	1,564	No Multicollinearity Occurs
Ad Relevance (x3)	0,601	1,663	No Multicollinearity Occurs

*Source: SPSS Data Processing Results, 2025*

Based on Table 5, all independent variables had a Tolerance value of > 0.10 and a VIF of < 10.00, with the highest VIF value of 1.663 in the Ad Relevance variable. Thus, there are no symptoms of multicollinearity in the regression model and this assumption is met.

#### 5.4.3 Heteroscedasticity Test

The heteroscedasticity test was carried out using the Glejser method by regressing the residual absolute value to an independent variable. The model is declared free of heteroscedasticity if the Sig. value > 0.05. The test results showed that all independent variables had no significant effect on the residual absolute value, namely Influencer Credibility (Sig. = 0.410), Brand Image (Sig. = 0.544), and Ad Relevance (Sig. = 0.395). All significance values are well above 0.05, so there are no symptoms of heteroscedasticity and the assumption of homoscedasticity is met.

#### 5.5 Multiple Linear Regression Analysis and Hypothesis Testing

Multiple linear regression analysis was conducted to test the influence of Influencer Credibility (X1), Brand Image (X2), and Ad Relevance (X3) on Buying Interest (Y) simultaneously or partially. The results of the analysis are presented in Table 6.

**Table 6. Multiple Linear Regression Analysis Results**

Variable	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
(Constant)	0.297	1.171	-	0.254	0.800
Ad Relevance (X3)	0.721	0.119	0.408	6.032	<0.001
Brand Image (X2)	0.531	0.072	0.483	7.353	<0.001
Influencer Credibility (X1)	0.019	0.048	0.026	0.392	0.696
R	0.798				
R Square (R <sup>2</sup> )	0.636				
F-count	77.041				

Source: SPSS Data Processing Results, 2025. Dependent Variable: Buy Interest (Y)

Based on Table 6, the regression equations formed are:

$$Y = 0.297 + 0.721 X3 + 0.531 X2 + 0.019 X1$$

A constant value of 0.297 means that if all independent variables are zero, consumer buying interest is at a value of 0.297. The Brand Image Coefficient (X2) of 0.531 is the largest of the three variables, indicating that every increase in one unit of brand image will increase buying interest by 0.531 units, assuming the other variables are constant. Ad Relevance (X3) has a coefficient of 0.721, which means that an increase of one unit of ad relevance increases buying interest by 0.721 units. Meanwhile, Influencer Credibility (X1) has a very small coefficient (0.019) and is not statistically significant.

### **F Test (Simultaneous)**

The F-value of 77.041 with a significance of  $< 0.001$  ( $< 0.05$ ) proves that simultaneously, Influencer Credibility, Brand Image, and Advertising Relevance have a significant effect on consumer Buying Interest. The regression model built was declared fit and suitable for use.

### **Coefficient of Determination ( $R^2$ )**

An R-Square ( $R^2$ ) value of **0.636** indicates that **63.6%** of the variation in consumer buying interest can be explained by all three independent variables in the model. The remaining 36.4% is influenced by other variables outside the model, such as brand trust, price, product quality, or situational factors.

### **T test (Partial)**

Partial hypothesis testing using a t-test with a significance level of 5% ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) resulted in the following findings:

1. **Influencer Credibility (X1):** Value  $t = 0.392$  with  $\text{Sig.} = 0.696 > 0.05$ . **The first hypothesis (H1) is rejected.** The credibility of influencers does not have a significant effect on the purchase interest of consumers.
2. **Brand Image (X2):** Value  $t = 7.353$  with  $\text{Sig.} < 0.001$ . **The second hypothesis (H2) is accepted.** Brand image has a positive and significant effect on consumer buying interest with the largest beta coefficient ( $\beta = 0.483$ ).
3. **Ad Relevance (X3):** Value  $t = 6.032$  with  $\text{Sig.} < 0.001$ . **The third hypothesis (H3) is accepted.** The relevance of advertising has a positive and significant effect on consumer buying interest ( $\beta = 0.408$ ).

The first most striking finding from this study was the insignificance of the influence of influencer credibility on partial buying interest ( $B = 0.019$ ;  $\beta = 0.026$ ;  $t = 0.392$ ;  $\text{Sig.} = 0.696$ ). This tiny coefficient is almost 28 times lower than brand image and 38 times lower than ad relevance, suggesting that while the direction is positive, consumer perception of an influencer's expertise, trust, and appeal doesn't necessarily drive purchase intent. These findings should be carefully synthesized with the available literature. The positive influence of influencer credibility on buying interest was indeed found in several Indonesian studies, but with the emphasis on different dimensions: the trustworthiness dimension was considered the most dominant by Rahmawati and Restuti (2022), while expertise relevant to the product category was the determining factor according to Saputra and Dewi (2023). This difference is not a contradiction, but rather reflects that the weight of each dimension of credibility is highly dependent on the context of the product and platform being studied, a conclusion that is also reinforced by the meta-analysis of Sotgiu et al. (2024) which asserts that the effectiveness of influencer credibility cannot be universally generalized. The influence of influencer attributes on buying interest was even found to be indirect, mediated by characterizations formed in the minds of consumers (Masuda et al., 2022), so the absence of mediating variables such as brand trust or emotional closeness in this model is most likely to be a "missing bridge" between credibility and buying interest.

This interpretation becomes more meaningful if it is associated with the demographic characteristics of the respondents. With 88.2% of respondents aged 18-25 years old who are digital natives and 79.4% of them using TikTok and Instagram intensively, exposure to influencer promotional content is already very high in their daily lives. This saturation condition triggers what is known as persuasion knowledge, which is the ability of consumers

to recognize and critically evaluate paid persuasion tactics (Sotgiu et al., 2024). Generation Z is known to prioritize the authenticity of content over just the figures who promote it, so endorsements that feel like paid ads tend to have less influence on their decisions (Alfiannor, 2024; Husna & Mairita, 2024). In other words, today's young Indonesian consumers have developed a selective resistance to influencer endorsements: they can admire an influencer without being immediately compelled to buy the product he is promoting. Similar findings were also reported by Mahendra and Edastama (2022), who found that influencer marketing had no effect on purchasing behavior when the influencer credibility dimension was not strong enough to build consumer trust, a condition that seems also relevant to the context of this study amid the saturation of promotional content on social media.

In contrast to influencer credibility, brand image actually appears as the strongest predictor in this model ( $B = 0.531$ ;  $\beta = 0.483$ ;  $t = 7.353$ ;  $\text{Sig.} < 0.001$ ). These findings are in line with a broad consensus in the literature: a positive and significant relationship between brand image and purchase decisions or interest has been found consistently across different product categories in Indonesia (Rizan et al., 2015; Djatmiko & Pradana, 2016), with the main argument that positive brand associations increase consumer confidence in product quality. This perspective is further enriched by the findings of a significant mediating role of brand image in the relationship between celebrity endorsement and purchase intention in Indonesian skincare products (Alessandro et al., 2023), which implicitly suggests that without a strong brand image, the effectiveness of influencer endorsements is weakened. Even when brand image was combined with brand trust, the model's ability to explain the variance in buying interest reached up to 70% (Salhab et al., 2023) higher than the  $R^2$  of this study model of 63.6%, suggesting that brand trust may be a missing variable and worth exploring in further research.

The strong influence of brand image in this study can also be understood through the context of the market studied. Surabaya, as the second metropolis in Indonesia, has a solid consumer base of local beauty products including for Somethinc as shown by Yasinta and Nainggolan (2023). Respondents dominated by students and college students (71.3%) were a highly brand-literate group: brand consciousness was proven to mediate the relationship between advertising perception and buying interest among Indonesian TikTok users (Yana et al., 2025), indicating that the younger generation in this digital ecosystem uses brand image as a cognitive anchor in making quick decisions amid the relentless flow of promotional content. In these conditions, brands that manage to build and maintain image consistency across digital touchpoints will automatically have a competitive advantage, regardless of who influencer is chosen to promote them. The process of forming a brand image itself involves the interpretation of various elements ranging from product attributes, benefits offered, to brand personality (Firmansyah, 2018) and continuous exposure to consistent influencer content has been proven to produce a stronger brand image than conventional advertising (Kusuma & Putri, 2021).

The third variable, advertising relevance, also contributed significantly to buying interest ( $B = 0.721$ ;  $\beta = 0.408$ ;  $t = 6.032$ ;  $\text{Sig.} < 0.001$ ). Although the standardized beta coefficient (0.408) is below the brand image (0.483), the non-standardized coefficient value ( $B = 0.721$ ) is actually the highest among all variables, indicating that every one unit increase in ad relevance perception results in a greater increase in buying interest in absolute terms. Ad relevance works through two synergistic mechanisms: it reduces consumer rejection of advertising while increasing their engagement. Widodo and Kurniawati (2020) show that high

advertising relevance actively reduces ad avoidance, pre-condition conditions that must be met before buying interest can be formed in the midst of social media ad saturation. Alalwan (2018) reinforces this finding by proving that ads that are considered relevant drive buying interest directly, while Zhu and Chang (2016) add that relevance creates informational value by making the ad feel like something that is intended for the consumer personally. This relevance effect is not absolutely linear Bang, Kim, and Choi (2018) warn that overly prominent ads can actually increase perceived goal impediment, and Kim and Huh (2017) found that consumer privacy sensitivity moderates this relationship but within optimal limits, ad relevance has proven to be a powerful catalyst for buying interest.

The high influence of advertising relevance in this study is very reasonable if it is associated with the platform used by the respondents. TikTok and Instagram, which are used by 79.4% of respondents, respectively, are platforms that rely on highly sophisticated user behavior-based content recommendation algorithms. When an ad appears on TikTok's For You Page or Instagram's Explore page, consumers are already in a receptive psychological state because the content matches their preferences recorded by algorithms. This condition structurally increases the perception of advertising relevance and explains why this variable has such a strong influence in this research model. The relevance of advertising in the context of TikTok Indonesia has even been proven to significantly form brand consciousness which then drives buying interest (Yana et al., 2025) an influence path that makes advertising relevance not only work directly on buying interest, but also strengthen brand image simultaneously, creating a synergistic effect between the two most influential variables in this model.

## **CONCLUSION**

Overall, the results show that brand image is the most dominant and strategic factor in shaping consumer buying interest on social media, followed by the relevance of advertising which has also been proven to have a significant influence, while influencer credibility does not provide a significant influence partially. Nonetheless, all three variables simultaneously contribute significantly to buying interest, indicating that an effective marketing strategy needs to integrate a strong brand image and relevant advertising content as a top priority, by placing the role of influencers as a supporting element rather than a key determinant in influencing young consumers' increasingly critical decisions in the digital age.

The findings of this study also send a clear signal to digital marketers: investing in brand image provides a greater return on buying interest than simply choosing a popular or credible influencer. Brands need to build and maintain image consistency across digital touchpoints, including the convenience of using products, ease of access to information, and a positive image that aligns with the values of target consumers. Building a strong brand image must precede an endorsement strategy, not the other way around.

In addition, proper market segmentation is crucial. With 71.3% of respondents being students and university students, brands need to design content that explicitly touches on the daily needs, aspirations, and lifestyles of this group rather than less relevant generic content. Ads that make consumers think 'this is exactly what I need' will be much more effective than ads that only feature well-known influencers.

The finding that influencer credibility does not have a significant effect directly signals the need to reorient influencer selection criteria. Brands should not only consider the number of followers or the popularity level of the influencer, but rather prioritize value congruence between the influencer, the brand, and the target audience. The chosen influencer must be able to produce content that feels relevant to the target audience, because the relevance of the content has been proven to have a much greater influence on buying interest. In practice, brands are better off having nano-influencers and micro-influencers with highly segmented and relevant audiences than mega-influencers who have a broad but less specific follower base.

A sustainable marketing strategy needs to focus on three pillars of brand image development: (1) convenience ensuring that the experience of using the product meets or exceeds the expectations formed through promotion; (2) ease of use pays attention to the ease of access to products both physically and digitally; and (3) a consistent positive image maintains the consistency of brand messages across all social media platforms so that positive associations are firmly embedded in consumers' memories. Trust built organically through these three pillars will be much more effective in driving continued buying interest than short-term influencer campaigns.

### **Research Limitations**

This study has limitations in the measurement of the ad relevance variable, which only uses two indicators, namely the suitability of ad content with personal needs and personal values of consumers. Other dimensions such as contextual relevance, informativeness, and entertainment value are not comprehensively covered, so the construct of ad relevance as measured in this study may not fully represent its broader conceptual scope.

Nevertheless, the use of these two indicators can be methodologically justified. Hair et al. (2010) stated that the number of indicators is not an absolute requirement for the validity of a construct, as long as the indicators used consistently measure the conceptual core of the variable and the Cronbach's Alpha value meets the established minimum threshold. In this study, the Cronbach's Alpha value for ad relevance of 0.799 has exceeded the  $\geq 0.70$  threshold recommended for confirmatory research. Cortina (1993) also asserts that constructs with few indicators remain valid when those indicators represent the most fundamental representation of the dimension being measured — which in this case is fulfilled, as both indicators refer to personal relevance as the conceptual core of ad relevance according to Celsi and Olson (1988). Thus, although this limitation needs to be acknowledged, the ad relevance measurement instrument in this study can still be theoretically and empirically justified. Future research is recommended to develop a more multidimensional scale to obtain a more comprehensive representation of the construct.

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