# ISRG Journal of Economics, Business & Management (ISRGJEBM)



OPEN

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# ISRG PUBLISHERS

Abbreviated Key Title: Isrg J Econ Bus Manag ISSN: 2584-0916 (Online)

Journal homepage: <a href="https://isrgpublishers.com/isrgjebm/">https://isrgpublishers.com/isrgjebm/</a> Volume – III Issue -II (March – April) 2025

Frequency: Bimonthly



# The Role of Influencers and Online Reviews in Enhancing Consumer Trust and Influencing Purchase Decisions

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| Received: 25.02.2025 | Accepted: 01.03.2025 | Published: 04.03.2025

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# **Abstract**

This study aims to analyze the influence of influencers and online reviews on purchasing decisions through consumer trust. The sampling technique used was accidental sampling, namely consumers who purchased Kopi Dari Hati Taman Dinari products with a total of 221 people. The questionnaire was distributed in December 2024. The data analysis method was carried out using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) using SmartPLS. In the digital era, the presence of influencers and online reviews is increasingly considered significant in influencing consumer behavior. However, the results of this study indicate that the presence of influencers does not have a significant influence on purchasing decisions. On the contrary, online reviews have a strong direct influence on purchasing decisions but do not have a significant impact on consumer trust. Consumer trust, as a mediating variable, is also not directly influenced by the presence of influencers. These findings indicate that although influencers are often used as a digital marketing strategy, this factor is not yet effective enough to build trust or encourage purchasing decisions. Online reviews, on the other hand, have a more direct impact on forming purchasing decisions without involving trust as an intermediary. This study provides practical implications for marketers and industry players to prioritize credible and relevant online review management strategies rather than relying solely on collaboration with influencers. In addition, this study also emphasizes the importance of understanding the dynamics between consumer trust and various elements of digital marketing.

**Keywords:** *Influencer, online reviews, trust, purchasing decisions.* 

# 1. INTRODUCTION

The advancement of the culinary industry in Indonesia, particularly in the beverage sector, has shown a substantial surge in recent years. One of the fastest-growing sectors is the coffee shop business. In line with evolving trends, coffee shops are often designed with a modern minimalist or industrial concept, creating a comfortable atmosphere for both relaxation and work. One of the unique aspects of coffee shops is the presence of skilled baristas who craft various types of coffee, delivering distinctive and high-quality flavors (Aidha, 2024). Similarly, Coffee Shop Dari Hati, located in Taman Dinari, offers a cozy environment with both indoor and outdoor seating, serving high-quality coffee—perfect for coffee enthusiasts looking to unwind and enjoy time with family or friends.

The development of information technology has made it easier to access various details about products or services. This allows consumers to research extensively before making a purchase decision. According to Solomon et al., (2016) a purchasing decision is the final step of several stages that lead to selecting one product among competing alternatives. When choosing a product, consumers eliminate options that do not meet their criteria and carefully weigh the pros and cons of each alternative.

Consumers now have access to various reviews and testimonials that can influence their perception of a brand. Therefore, a deep understanding of trust is crucial for companies to design effective marketing strategies. According to Rousseau et al. (1998) trust is a psychological state involving a willingness to accept something as it is, based on the expectation that others will act in good faith.

One strategy that coffee shop businesses can use to attract consumers, boost sales, and influence purchasing decisions is leveraging influencers. According to Sudha & Sheena (2017) influencer marketing involves identifying and activating individuals who have influence over a specific audience or media, with the goal of engaging them in brand campaigns to enhance reach, sales, or engagement. As individuals with influence and large social media followings, influencers shape consumer opinions and preferences through the content they share. In this regard, influencers play a significant role in shaping consumer purchasing decisions in the digital era. Previous research also found that influencers significantly impact purchasing decisions (Riska et al., 2023).

Another key factor influencing purchasing decisions in the coffee shop business is online reviews. According to Filieri (2015) online reviews refer to positive, neutral, or negative information about a product or service that is created and published on Consumer Review Websites by potential customers, past customers, or current customers. Therefore, Coffee Shop Dari Hati Taman Dinari maintains product quality and service excellence to obtain positive reviews. Prior research by Shafwah et al. (2024) highlighted that online reviews have a significant and positive impact on purchasing decisions.

The objective of this study is to examine the influence of influencers and online reviews on purchasing decisions through consumer trust at Kopi Dari Hati Taman Dinari...

# 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

# 2.1 INFLUENCER

Glucksman (2017) Defining an influencer is an individual who can create various content or carry out activities that have a specific purpose to market the brand, so that it can be promoted well and have a positive impact on the product being marketed. Those who argue that Influencers are ordinary people who have become online celebrities by creating and sharing content on social media. They generally have expertise in a specific area, such as healthy lifestyle, travel, culinary, lifestyle, beauty, or modelling (Lou & Yuan, 2019). Social media users usually see influencers as attractive, authentic, and have similarities to themselves (Ki et al., 2020). There are five influencer indicators identified by Venciute et al., (2023), namely: (1) Trustworthiness (2) Attractiveness (3) Experience (4) Usefulness of content (5) Congruence

According to (Guo et al., 2018) trust is a customer's willingness to rely on a brand, driven by the belief or expectation that the brand has credibility, goodwill, and capabilities in terms of its environmental performance. When trusted influencers recommend a product, their followers tend to feel more comfortable and confident to try the product. Previous researchers Setyawati & Firdaus (2020) support this by showing that influencers have a significant effect on trust.

According to Bordoloi (2023), purchasing decisions are made by consumers based on various factors such as price, convenience, reputation, and safety, the importance of each of these factors to the company's success is influenced by market competition and the unique preferences of each customer. Influencers have a great influence on consumers' purchasing decisions, they can build trust and credibility in the brands they are promoting through authentic content and personal recommendations. This is reinforced by previous researchers Lestiyani & Purwanto (2024) who showed that influencers have a significant influence on consumer decisions.

H1: There is an influence of influencers on trust

H2: There is an influence of influencers on purchase decisions

 ${f H3}$ : There is an influence of influencers on purchase decisions through trust

#### 2.2 ONLINE REVIEWS

An online review is a written review from a customer that describes various characteristics of the product, such as its advantages and disadvantages (Lackermair et al., 2013). The reviews provide information that focuses on the personal experiences of buyers who have tried the product (Park & Lee, 2008). With this information, consumers can judge the quality of products based on reviews and other user experiences, thereby reducing search time and risk when making purchases (Mo et al., 2015). There are 3 dimensions of online review according to Tran (2020), namely: (1) Textual comment (2) Contextual image (3) rating.

Kotler & Keller (2016) stated that a purchase decision occurs when a buyer realizes a need or problem, which can arise from internal impulses or from external influences, when internal impulses such as hunger or thirst reach a certain point, it can motivate a person to act. Online reviews can reduce uncertainty and risk when buying, as well as help consumers make more informed purchasing decisions Informed and thoughtful. Previous research by Rusilawati et al., (2022) also menunjukkan bahwa online review memiliki dampak signifikan terhadap keputusan pembelian.

According to Mayer et al., (1995) the definition of trust is the willingness of a party to become vulnerable to the actions of the other party, based on the expectation that the party will perform certain actions that are important to the party in trust, regardless of

the ability to monitor or control the other party. Credible and informative reviews can increase consumer trust in the product or service. This statement is also reinforced by previous research by Anggraeni et al., (2023) which found that online reviews have a significant impact on trust.

H4: There is an influence of online reviews on trust

H5: There is an influence of online reviews on purchase decisions

**H6**: There is an influence of online reviews on purchase decisions through trust

#### 2.3 TRUST

Trust is not something that can be bought just like that, they are the ones responsible for building a safe and trust-filled business (Greene et al., 2024). Trust is a company's willingness to rely on business partners. This trust is influenced by a variety of interpersonal and inter-organizational factors, such as competence, integrity, honesty, and perceived goodwill (Kotler & Keller, 2016). Trust is considered crucial in customer relationships between companies and is recognized as an intangible asset that arises from the interaction between companies and customers (Bae, 2024). Based on Lassoued & Hobbs (2015) there are five indicators of trust, namely: (1) competence (2) credibility (3) benevolence (4) reputation.

According to (Chen et al., 2023) a purchasing decision refers to the process by which a consumer selects or purchases a product, brand, or service based on certain criteria that can meet their needs. This process involves careful and complex decision-making. Trust in purchasing decisions reflects consumers' belief that the product or service they choose will provide benefits as expected. This is also evidenced by previous research (Dandiapuri et al., 2024) which stated that there is a positive influence of trust on purchase decisions.

H7: There is an influence of trust on purchase decisions

#### 2.4 PURCHASE DECISION

Purchase decisions tend to be influenced by consumer perceptions of the company's products and brands. Specifically, consumers' purchasing behavior is typically shaped by their previous experience in using a company's products and how well they meet their specific needs (Hanaysha, 2022). Apart from consumer perception, personal, psychological, social factors, are the result of the purchase decision process where various factors have different roles (Carrillo et al., 2023). Based on Kotler & Armstrong (2018) there are 5 stages in making decisions, namely: (1) need recognition (2) information search (3) evaluation of alternatives (4) purchase decision (5) postpurchase behavior.

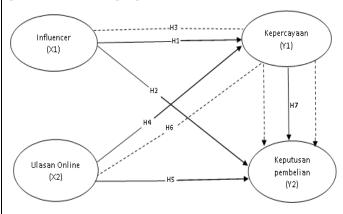


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

#### 3. METHODOLOGY

Descriptive quantitative research is a type of research applied in this study, primary data is taken directly by distributing questionnaires directly using google forms as a data collection medium to consumers of Coffee From the Heart of Taman Dinari. The population contained in this study is all consumers who have visited the coffee shop Dari Hati Taman Dinari, then the sample determined in this study is consumers of the coffee shop Dari Hati Taman Dinari who have made a purchase at least 2 times in the last month. The sampling technique applied in this study is accidental sampling. The data analysis technique used is PLS-SEM and uses Smart PLS 3 to process data. The indicators used in this study amounted to 17 indicators, using a likert scale of 1 – 5 for measurement.

# 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

#### 4.1 Deskripsi Responden

Characteristic	Amount	Presentation (%)
Jenis Kelamin		
Male	116	55%
Female	95	45%
Age		
<20 years	52	24.6%
21 – 30 years	150	71.1%
31 - 40 years	9	4.3%
> 40 years		
Job		
Students	148	70.1%
Private Employee	40	19%
Civil Servants	10	4.7%
Other	13	6.2%
Domicile		
Around Depok	176	83%
Outside Depok	35	16.6%
Purchase Intensity		
2 – 5	22	10.4 %
> 5	189	89.6%
Get Recommendations		
Social Media	188	89.1%
Colleagues	23	10.9%

Based on the respondents' profiles, the majority of respondents (55%) are men, while the other 45% are women. This shows that both men and women are interested in making purchases at the café. Most respondents were between the ages of 21-30, with a percentage of 71.1%. In addition, 83% of respondents live around Depok, and the majority have the status of students or students (70.1%). This data illustrates the relationship between student status, residence around Depok, and the age range of 21-30 years. From the same data, it is also known that 89.6% of consumers visit the café.

# 4.2 Measurement Model (Construction Validity and Reliability)

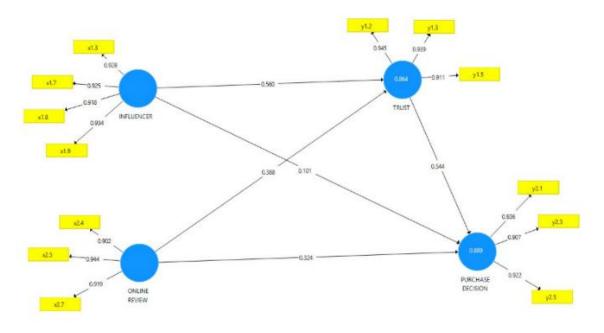


Figure 2: Measuring model with outer loading

In this study, there is one exogenous variable, namely influencers and online reviews, which are used as part of modeling. Meanwhile, trust and purchase decision are endogenous variables. The validity of convergence is verified through the outer loading value, which is often referred to as the load factor. An indicator is considered to meet the convergent validity in the good category if it has an outer loading value > 0.05. Based on the information shown in Figure II, none of the variable indicators had a value below 0.05, so all indicators were declared feasible and suitable for use in further research.

# 4.3 Evaluasi Model Pengukuran

Variable	Indicator	Items	Standard Estimation	Reliability	AVE
Influencer	1.Trustworthiness	X1.3	0.928	0.960	0.858
	2. Attractiveness	X1.7	0.925		
	3. Experience	X1.8	0.918		
	4.Usefulness of content	X1.9	0.934		
	5. Congruence				
	(Moncayo et al., 2020)				
Online Review	1. Textual comment	X2.4	0.902	0.944	0.850
	2. Contextual image	X2.5	0.944		
	3. Rating	X2.7	0.919		
	(Tran, 2020)				
Trust	1. Competence	Y1.2	0.945	0.952	0.868
	2. Credibility	Y1.3	0.939		
	3. Benevolence	Y1.5	0.911		
	4. Reputation.				
	(Lassoued & Hobbs, 2015)				
Pruchase	1. need recognition	Y2.1	0.939	0.944	0.850
Decision	2. Information search	Y2.3	0.907		
	3. evaluation of alternatives	Y2.5	0.922		
	4. purchase decision				
	5. postpurchase behavior.				
	(Kotler & Armstrong, 2018)				

In addition to evaluating the cross-loading value, the validity of the discrimination can also be analyzed through the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value for each indicator variable. In order for a model to be considered good, the AVE value must exceed 0.05. Based on the data displayed in Table 4.3, the variables of product quality (X1), influencer (X2), online review (Y1), trust (Y2), and purchase decision show an AVE value greater than 0.05. Therefore, all variables in this study have strong discriminatory validity.

#### 4.4 Discriminant Validity - Fornell-Larcker

Variable	Influencer	Online Review	<b>Purchase Decision</b>	
Influencer	0,926			
Online Review	0,918	0,922		
Purchase Decision	0,897	0,907	0,922	
Trust	0,917	0,902	0,928	0.932

In Table 4.4, the highest values for each variable are seen as follows: Influencer (0.926), Online Review (0.922), Trust (0.928), and Purchase Decision (0.932). Based on these results, the validity of discrimination can be declared valid if each variable shows a higher loading factor value compared to other latent constructs.

#### 4.5 Multikolinearitas-Inner VIF Value

	Influencer	Online Review	Purchase Decision	Trust
INFLUENCER			8,693	6,394
ONLINE REVIEW			7,497	6,394
PURCHASE DECISION				
TRUST			7,328	

The VIF value in this study (Table 4.5 ) ranged from 6,394 to 8,693, which exceeded the threshold of 5.0. These findings indicate the existence of multicollinearity problems among independent variables.

#### 4.6 R-Square

	R Square Adjusted	
Purchase Decision	0,889	0,887
Trust	0,864	0,86

In Table 4.6, the value of the determination coefficient ranges from 0 to 1. Based on the table, the determination coefficient for a purchase decision is 0.889 and for trust is 0.864. This shows that the Influencer and Online Review variables (independent variables) have a significant influence on the bound variables, namely purchase decision and trust.

#### 4.7 F-Square

1				
	Purchase Decision	Trust		
INFLUENCER	0,011	0,360		
ONLINE REVIEW	0,126	0,172		
PURCHASE DECISION				
TRUST	0,364			

Calculating the size effect ( $f^2$ ) in the model aims to assess whether the deletion of a construct has a significant impact on endogenous constructs. The criteria for the effect of size  $f^2$  are as follows: if the value of  $f^2 = 0.02$ , then the effect of size is considered small; if  $f^2 = 0.15$ , the size effect is considered moderate; and if  $f^2 = 0.35$ , the effect of size is considered large.

#### 4.8 Prediction Accuracy Test (Q2)

	SSO	SSE	Q² (=1-SSE/SSO)
INFLUENCER	824,000	215,268	0,739
ONLINE REVIEW	618,000	210,528	0.659
PURCHASE DECISION	618,000	212,501	0,656
TRUST	618,000	191,819	0,690

Testing the accuracy of the prediction can be done using the  $Q^2$  value listed in Table 6. If the  $Q^2$  is greater than 0, the model is considered to have high prediction accuracy. Conversely, if the  $Q^2$  is less than 0, the model is considered to have low accuracy. The table shows that for variables that have a  $Q^2$  of > 0, the model shows a high level of prediction accuracy, with values between 0.656 and 0.739.

#### 4.9 Hypothesis Testing

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values	Result
INFLUENCER -> TRUST	0,560	0,574	0,137	4,098	0,000	Accepted
INFLUENCER -> PURCHASE DECISION	0,101	0,118	0,137	0,735	0,463	Rejected
INFLUENCER -> TRUST -> PURCHASE DECISION	0,305	0,303	0,104	2,920	0,004	Accepted
ONLINE REVIEW -> TRUST	0,388	0,375	0,130	2,995	0,003	Accepted
ONLINE REVIEW -> PURCHASE DECISION	0,324	0,310S	0,109	2,969	0,003	Accepted
ONLINE REVIEW -> TRUST -> PURCHASE DECISION	0,211	0,210	0,109	1,937	0,053	Rejected
TRUST -> PURCHASE DECISION	0,544	0,540	0,162	3,366	0,001	Accepted

The t-value of 1.96 is a crucial threshold used to test the hypothesis. The hypothesis is accepted if the t-value is greater than 1.96, which means there is an effect, while the hypothesis is rejected if the t-value is less than 1.96, which means there is no effect. Based on the explanation in the table above, the results of the hypothesis test show that if the statistical t-value is greater than the t-table (1.96) and the p-value is below 0.05, then the hypothesis is accepted. In this study, the relationship between influencers and trust has a t-statistical value of 4.098 (greater than 1.96) and a pvalue of 0.000 (less than 0.05), which means that this hypothesis has a positive and significant effect, so the hypothesis is accepted. In contrast, the relationship between influencers and purchase decisions shows a t-statistic value of 0.735 (less than 1.96) and a pvalue of 0.463 (greater than 0.05), so this hypothesis is rejected because it has no significant effect. Furthermore, the indirect relationship between influencers and purchase decisions through trust shows a t-statistical value of 2.920 (greater than 1.96) and a pvalue of 0.004 (less than 0.05), which means the hypothesis is accepted. The relationship between online reviews and trust has a t-statistic of 2.995 (greater than 1.96) and a p-value of 0.003 (less than 0.05), so this hypothesis is also accepted. Likewise, the relationship between online reviews and purchase decisions, with a t-statistic of 2.969 (greater than 1.96) and a p-value of 0.003 (less than 0.05), means that this hypothesis is accepted. However, the indirect relationship between online review and purchase decision through trust showed a t-statistic of 1.937 (less than 1.96) and a p-value of 0.053 (greater than 0.05), so this hypothesis was rejected because it had no significant effect. Finally, the relationship between trust and purchase decision has a t-statistic of 3.366 (greater than 1.96) and a p-value of 0.001 (less than 0.05), which means that this hypothesis has a positive and significant effect, so the hypothesis is accepted.

#### 5. DISCUSSION

In this study, influencers have a positive effect on trust in the coffee shop business, influencers also help attract attention, increase sales, and build a coffee shop brand image, influencers can also have a positive impact on customer trust because they are often considered an authentic and reliable source of information. Previous research has proven that influencers have a positive influence on trust (Fairuzamily & Silitonga, 2021),

In addition, influencers do not have an impact on purchasing decisions, in this case influencers if they are not relevant to the target audience, lack credibility, produce less interesting content, or if the marketing strategy used is not effective. In addition, an audience that is increasingly critical of paid promotions can also

reduce influencer influence in purchasing decisions. According to previous research conducted by Irawant (2024), influencers do not have a positive impact on purchase decisions.

In addition, influencers have a positive influence on purchasing decisions through trust, This trust arises because influencers are considered authentic, have real experiences, and are able to provide honest reviews about products or layanan. When audiences feel emotionally connected to influencers, they are more likely to follow the recommendations given, thus influencing purchasing decisions. Previous research conducted by Ramdhani et al., (2024) stated that there is a positive influence of influencers on purchase decisions.

Online reviews have a positive effect on trust, The more positive reviews available, the greater the trust that is formed, because consumers feel confident that the product has been proven to be of high quality. In addition, transparent and honest online reviews help reduce doubts and support consumers in making purchasing decisions. This statement is also evidenced by previous researcher Kamisa et al., (2022) who stated that online reviews have a positive effect on trust.

Online reviews positively impact purchase decisions, positive reviews can increase consumer confidence, validate their choices, and encourage them to buy. Even negative reviews, if well addressed by the product or service provider, can show a professional response and improve the brand's reputation. As a result, online reviews are one of the important factors in influencing purchase decisions. This is also proven by previous researchers Shafira & Tuti (2024) who stated that online reviews have a significant effect on purchase decisions.

Online reviews have no positive effect on purchase decisions through trust, there are too few reviews or too negative, consumers may lose confidence in the quality of the product or service. Ambiguity in how reviews are managed, such as no response from service providers to negative reviews, can also reduce trust and hinder purchase decisions. Researchers have previously proven that online reviews on purchase decisions through consumer trust are not significant (Banurea et al., 2023).

Trust has a positive effect on purchase decisions, trust can be gained through previous experiences, positive reviews from other customers, and transparent communication from the seller. In the long run, trust can also strengthen the relationship between brands and consumers, creating loyalty and increasing the likelihood of repeat purchases. Consumers who feel valued and trusted are more likely to make purchasing decisions more easily. According to previous researchers, Faisal & Silitonga (2024) stated that trust has a significant effect on trust.

# 6. CONCLUSION

This study shows that variables that can have a direct and positive influence on trust include influencers and online reviews. In addition, variables that directly contribute positively to purchase decisions are online reviews and trust. The ones that do not affect the purchase decision directly are influencers and the variables that can influence indirectly through mediation are influencers, on purchase decisions, with trust mediated proven to have a positive effect. Then the variable that can have an indirect effect through mediation is an online review of purchase decisions mediated by trust proven to have no positive effect.

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