

The Influence of Influencer Credibility on Skincare Product Purchase Intention through Trust in Influencers as a Mediating Variable Among TikTok Shop Users in Padang City

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Abstract. *The quick expansion of social commerce via TikTok Shop has led businesses to use influencers as a way to promote products and increase the likelihood that consumers will make purchases. This research investigates how influencers' credibility affects the intention to buy skincare products, with a focus on trust in influencers as an intermediary factor among residents of Padang City. This study used a quantitative method, specifically a survey, involving 144 TikTok users who had viewed influencer content about skincare products. The study employed purposive sampling as the method for selecting participants, and the data were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling–Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) with the help of the SmartPLS 4 software. The findings show that influencer credibility has a positive and significant impact on trust in influencers ($\beta = 0.752$; $p < 0.001$) as well as on the intention to make a purchase ($\beta = 0.474$; $p < 0.001$). There is a positive and significant relationship between trust in influencers and the intention to make a purchase, ($\beta = 0.428$ and $p < 0.001$). Additionally, it was found that trust in influencers partially mediated the link between influencer credibility and purchase intention ($\beta = 0.322$; $p < 0.001$). This suggests that influencer credibility can boost purchase intention both directly and indirectly by building greater consumer trust. Therefore, when consumers perceive a higher level of credibility in an influencer, they tend to trust that influencer more and are more likely to intend to buy skincare products that are promoted on TikTok Shop.*

Keywords: *Influencer Credibility, Trust in Influencers, Purchase Intention, Tiktok Shop, Skincare Products*

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INTRODUCTION

TikTok Shop has become the most popular social commerce platform in Indonesia, with 45% of Indonesians using it to shop (Ibrahim et al., 2025; Sari et al., 2025; Komaladewi et al., 2025; Irfan et al., 2025; Jusuf & Sarwono, 2025). By integrating short-form videos, live-streaming features, and direct purchasing functions, TikTok Shop enables consumers to obtain product information and complete transactions within the same platform. This characteristic is particularly relevant for skincare products, where consumers often require extensive information and recommendations before making purchase decisions. Based on Kompas.co.id The beauty and personal care category has become one of the fastest-growing sectors in

Indonesian e-commerce, reflecting both increasing consumer demand and intensified market competition (Nurfadilah et al., 2026; Izzaturrahmah et al., 2026).

To address this competitive environment, companies increasingly employ influencer marketing as a communication strategy to influence consumer perceptions and purchasing decisions. Globally, the influencer marketing industry has expanded substantially, growing from USD 1.7 billion in 2015 to USD 24 billion in 2024 (Nechyporchuk, 2025; Motamedi & Tabatabaei, 2025). According to Ohanian on Alcántara-Pilar et al. (2024), the effectiveness of communication depends largely on the perceived expertise, trustworthiness, and attractiveness of the information source. Influencers who possess these characteristics are more likely to persuade consumers and shape favorable attitudes toward promoted products (Ferreira et al., 2024; Filieri et al., 2023; Lee & Eastin, 2020).

Previous studies have demonstrated that influencer credibility positively affects consumer trust and purchase intention (Leite & Baptista, 2022). However, the relationship between influencer credibility and purchase intention may not occur directly but rather through psychological mechanisms that influence how consumers process information. Trust Theory proposed by Söllner et al. (2016), Hasbiah & Hasdiansa (2025), Aslam et al. (2020), Tseng (2023) suggests that trust plays a central role in establishing and maintaining relationships between consumers and information providers. In the context of social commerce, trust in influencers is considered a critical factor determining whether consumers accept and act upon product recommendations (Lee, 2025; Chen et al., 2019; Kim & Chan-Olmsted, 2022).

This perspective is further supported by the Stimulus–Organism–Response (S-O-R) framework, which explains that influencer credibility functions as an external stimulus, trust in influencers represents the internal psychological state of consumers, and purchase intention reflects the behavioral response. Therefore, trust in influencers may serve as a mediating mechanism through which influencer credibility affects consumers' purchase intentions (Garg & Bakshi, 2024; Khan et al., 2024; Abbas & Salim, 2023; Saima, & Khan, 2020). The importance of trust in influencers can be observed in the Indonesian skincare market. One notable example involves the TikTok account @dokterdetektif, which provides scientific reviews of skincare products based on medical expertise.

Following reviews that questioned the claims of several skincare products, notable changes in sales performance were recorded. According to data from Kalodata.com, the skincare brand SSSKIN experienced a decline in sales value from IDR 24.91 billion to IDR 9.68 billion, while Gladfisy's sales decreased from IDR 24.45 billion to IDR 11.69 billion between November and December 2024 after the account published reviews highlighting inconsistencies between product claims and actual product performance. In contrast, brands whose products were evaluated positively experienced substantial growth. For example, Hanasui recorded a 252% increase in sales during the same period (Shantilawati et al., 2025; Hendri et al., 2025; Saputri et al., 2025).

These findings provide empirical evidence that influencer credibility can generate measurable effects on consumer behavior in TikTok Shop, influencing how consumers evaluate products and make purchasing decisions. This phenomenon indicates that consumers rely heavily on credible influencers when evaluating skincare products and making purchase decisions. However, while the impact of influencer credibility on consumer responses has been widely acknowledged, the psychological mechanisms underlying this relationship remain insufficiently explored. In particular, empirical studies examining the mediating role of trust in influencers within the TikTok Shop ecosystem remain limited, especially in the Indonesian context (Permatasari & Wahyudi, 2024; Ferdy & Wahyudi, 2026; Muliani et al., 2026).

Empirical evidence from previous studies also supports the importance of influencer credibility and trust in shaping consumer behavior. Alcántara-Pilar et al., (2024) and Anggara et al. (2025), found that influencer credibility positively and significantly affects purchase intention

on TikTok, with trust in influencers serving as a mediating variable. Similarly, (Kim & Kim (2021) demonstrated that influencer credibility dimensions, particularly expertise and authenticity, enhance consumer trust, which subsequently increases purchase intention. The mediating role of trust was also confirmed by Andonopoulos et al. (2023), who reported that authenticity influences purchase intention through trustworthiness.

Furthermore, Kwiatak et al. (2021) revealed that the credibility of influencers' recommendations positively affects consumer attitudes and behavior toward brands, with trust playing a crucial role in shaping consumer responses. Evidence from Indonesia further supports this relationship, as Andriyani et al., (2025) found that influencer credibility significantly influences brand trust. In contrast, Cheah et al., (2024) demonstrated that a decline in influencer credibility caused by over-endorsement negatively affects purchase intention. Collectively, these studies suggest that influencer credibility and trust are important determinants of consumer purchase decisions in social media environments.

Although previous studies have investigated the effects of influencer credibility on trust and purchase intention, several research gaps remain. First, most studies have been conducted outside Indonesia, limiting their applicability to Indonesian consumers who may exhibit different social, cultural, and purchasing characteristics. Second, limited research has specifically examined the role of trust in influencers as a mediating variable in the relationship between influencer credibility and purchase intention within TikTok Shop. Third, studies focusing on consumers in Padang City remain scarce despite the city's large proportion of productive-age social media users. Therefore, this study contributes to the literature by examining the effect of influencer credibility on skincare product purchase intention through trust in influencers as a mediating variable among TikTok Shop users in Padang City.

METHODS

This study adopted a quantitative approach employing a causal-associative research design to examine the causal relationships among the proposed variables. The research was conducted in Padang City, Indonesia, with the target population consisting of active TikTok users who had been exposed to influencer-generated content related to skincare products. The sample comprised 144 respondents selected through purposive sampling based on predetermined criteria. The sample size was determined in accordance with the recommendations of Hair et al. (2019) for PLS-SEM analysis. Data were collected through an online questionnaire using a five-point Likert scale (Likert, 1932). The questionnaire consisted of 15 measurement items adapted from (Alcántara-Pilar et al., 2024), representing 14 research indicators. Purchase intention was measured using seven indicators: intention to purchase influencer-recommended products (NB1), willingness to recommend products to others (NB2), consideration of future purchases (NB3), lack of purchase intention (NB4, reverse-coded), likelihood of purchasing (NB5), intention to repurchase when needed (NB6), and purchase intention based on future needs (NB7). Trust in influencers was measured using three indicators: influencers' commitment fulfilment (KTI1), honesty and sincerity of information (KTI2), and trustworthiness of promises (KTI3). Influencer credibility was measured using four dimensions: expertise (KI1), effectiveness (KI2), reliability (KI3), and concern for followers. The concern for followers dimension was operationalized using two measurement items (KI4 and KI5), resulting in a total of 15 questionnaire items. The collected data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with SmartPLS 4 software. The analysis included evaluation of the measurement model (outer model) through convergent validity, discriminant validity, and construct reliability tests, followed by evaluation of the structural model (inner model) using the bootstrapping procedure to test the proposed hypotheses and assess the significance of the path coefficients.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

After testing 144 respondents who had passed the screening process based on the predetermined criteria, the following results were obtained.

Validity Testing

The validity test is carried out through two methods, namely convergent validity and discriminant validity.

Convergent Validity

The indicator is declared valid in measuring its construct if the load factor value is above 0.70. Then, each variable must have an Average variance extracted (AVE) value of > 0.50 (Hair et al., 2022). The following is a table of the results of the convergence validity instrument test processing.

Table 1. Loading Factor Output

Item	Influencer Credibility (KI)	Trust in Influencer (KTI)	Purchase Intention (NB)
KI1	0.851		
KI2	0.907		
KI3	0.876		
KI4	0.847		
KI5	0.872		
KTI1		0.916	
KTI2		0.908	
KTI3		0.886	
NB1			0.801
NB2			0.796
NB3			0.785
NB4			0.760
NB5			0.842
NB6			0.808
NB7			0.854

Source: Processed data, 2026

Table 1 shows that all indicators achieved factor loadings greater than 0.70, confirming that the measurement items adequately represent their respective constructs. In addition, convergent validity was evaluated using the Average Variance Extracted (AVE), where values exceeding 0.50 indicate satisfactory convergent validity.

Table 2. Average variance extracted (AVE)

Variabel	Average variance extracted (AVE)
Influencers credibility	0.759
Trust in Influencer	0.816
Purchase Intention	0.651

Source: Processed data, 2026

As shown in Table 2, all constructs achieved AVE values exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.50. These results indicate that each construct demonstrates adequate convergent validity, suggesting that the indicators are able to explain a substantial proportion of the variance in their respective latent constructs. Therefore, all constructs included in this study can be considered valid and suitable for further analysis.

Discriminant Validity

Discriminant validity was evaluated to confirm that each construct was conceptually and empirically distinct from the others. The results of the discriminant validity assessment are presented in the following table.

Table 3. Output Cross Loading Value

Item	Influencers credibility (KI)	Trust in Influencer (KTI)	Purchase Intention (NB)
KI1	0.851	0.672	0.675
KI2	0.907	0.690	0.763
KI3	0.876	0.628	0.668
KI4	0.847	0.631	0.673
KI5	0.872	0.651	0.681
KTI1	0.732	0.916	0.746
KTI2	0.649	0.908	0.707
KTI3	0.653	0.886	0.670
NB1	0.640	0.659	0.801
NB2	0.644	0.654	0.796
NB3	0.589	0.587	0.785
NB4	0.550	0.630	0.760
NB5	0.670	0.634	0.842
NB6	0.687	0.643	0.808
NB7	0.702	0.622	0.854

Source: Processed data, 2026

As shown in Table 3, each indicator demonstrates a stronger correlation with its designated construct than with other constructs in the model. Therefore, the discriminant validity criterion is satisfied, indicating that all constructs are empirically distinct and adequately represented by their respective indicators.

Reliability Testing

Reliability was assessed by examining Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability values. A latent construct is considered reliable when both Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability exceed the recommended threshold of 0.70 (Hair et al., 2022). The results of the reliability assessment are presented in the following table.

Table 4. Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability Output

Variable	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability
Influencer credibility	0.920	0.940
Trust in Influencer	0.887	0.930
Purchase intention	0.910	0.929

Source: Processed data, 2026

Based on the results presented in Table 4, all constructs achieved Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability values above the recommended threshold of 0.70. Therefore, the measurement model demonstrates adequate internal consistency reliability, indicating that the instruments are reliable in measuring their intended constructs.

Structural Model Assessment (Inner Model)

The structural model (inner model) was evaluated to examine the causal relationships among the study variables. This evaluation includes the coefficient of determination (R^2), which measures the proportion of variance in endogenous variables explained by the exogenous

variables. Higher R^2 values indicate stronger explanatory and predictive capabilities of the model. The results are presented in the following table:

Table 5. R-square

Variable	R-square	R-square adjusted
Trust in Influencer (Z)	0.566	0.563
Purchase Intention (Y)	0.713	0.709

Source: Processed data, 2026

The results show that the R^2 value for Trust in Influencers is 0.566, indicating that 56.6% of its variance is explained by the variables included in the model. Meanwhile, Purchase Intention obtained an R^2 value of 0.713, indicating that 71.3% of its variance is explained by the model. These findings suggest that the proposed model has substantial explanatory power in predicting the endogenous variables.

Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis testing was conducted to examine the relationships among the proposed variables by assessing the path coefficients. The significance of each relationship was determined using the criteria of a p-value less than 0.05 or a t-statistic greater than 1.96. The analysis was performed using SmartPLS 4 software through the bootstrapping procedure, which was employed to evaluate the significance and strength of the relationships between exogenous and endogenous constructs. The results of the structural model testing are illustrated in the following figure.

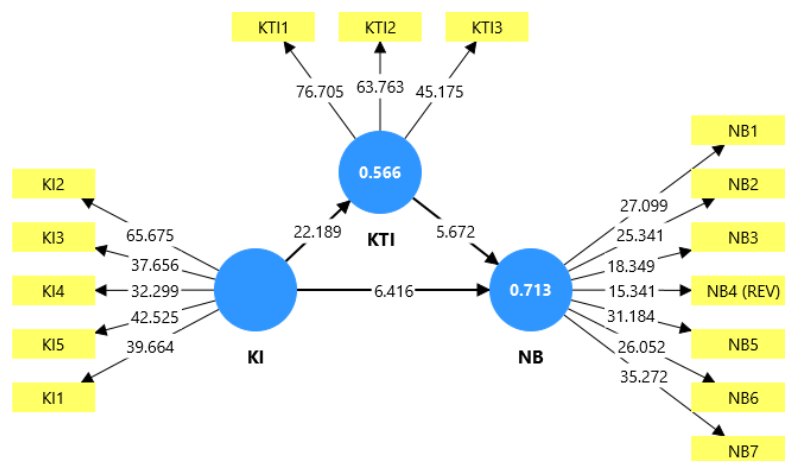


Figure 1. Data Analysis Results

Source: Processed data, 2026

Based on the structural model presented in Figure 1, the results of the path analysis are summarized in the following table:

Table 6. Path Coefficients

	Original sample (O)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values
Influencer Credibility -> Trust in Influencer	0.752	22.189	0.000
Influencer Credibility -> Purchase Intention	0.474	6.416	0.000
Trust in Influencer -> Purchase Intention	0.428	5.672	0.000
Influencer Credibility -> Trust in Influencer -> Purchase Intention	0.322	5.516	0.000

Source: Processed data, 2026

Based on the results shown in the Table 6, the findings of the hypothesis testing are presented as follows:

Influencer Credibility has a positive and significant effect on Trust in Influencers

The bootstrapping results indicate that Influencer Credibility has a positive and significant effect on Trust in Influencers ($\beta = 0.752$, $t = 22.189$, $p < 0.001$). This finding suggests that higher levels of perceived influencer credibility lead to greater trust in influencers among consumers. Therefore, H1 is supported.

In the context of skincare products, influencer credibility is particularly important because consumers may not be able to directly verify product safety, ingredient suitability, or effectiveness before purchasing and using a product. Influencers who demonstrate adequate knowledge, explain product ingredients clearly, provide realistic evaluations, and communicate both the advantages and limitations of a product can reduce consumers' uncertainty. Such credibility reassures consumers that the information is not merely promotional, thereby strengthening their trust in the influencer and the recommendations presented.

This suggests that consumers are more likely to trust influencers who are perceived as knowledgeable, reliable, and capable of providing effective product recommendations. From the perspective of the Stimulus–Organism–Response (S-O-R) theory, influencer credibility serves as the stimulus (S) that shapes consumers' internal psychological state, namely trust in influencers (O). The stronger the perceived credibility of the influencer, the higher the level of trust developed by consumers. This finding is consistent with the study of Alcántara-Pilar et al., (2024), which reported that influencer credibility is a significant antecedent of trust in social commerce environments. Therefore, influencer credibility serves as a crucial antecedent of trust, indicating that consumers are more likely to trust influencers who are perceived as credible and reliable sources of information.

Trust in Influencers positively and significantly affects Purchase Intention

The results show that Trust in Influencers positively and significantly affects Purchase Intention ($\beta = 0.428$, $t = 5.672$, $p < 0.001$). This indicates that consumers who place greater trust in influencers are more likely to develop intentions to purchase skincare products promoted through TikTok Shop. Therefore, H2 is supported.

Trust plays an important role in converting product information into purchase intention because skincare purchases involve relatively high personal risk. An unsuitable product may cause irritation, allergic reactions, or other undesirable effects, while product effectiveness may differ according to skin type and condition. Consumers who believe that an influencer communicates honestly and considers followers' interests are therefore more willing to accept the recommendation. Trust reduces perceived uncertainty and provides consumers with greater confidence that the promoted skincare product may be safe, suitable, and capable of delivering the expected benefits.

This finding implies that consumers who trust influencers are more likely to consider purchasing the skincare products they recommend. Within the S-O-R framework, trust represents the organism (O) that translates external stimuli into behavioral responses. When consumers perceive influencers as trustworthy, the information provided is more readily accepted, thereby increasing the likelihood of purchase intention as the response (R). This result supports previous studies by Kim & Kim (2021) and Kwiatek et al. (2021), which identified trust as a key determinant of consumers' purchase intentions in social media marketing contexts.

Influencer Credibility has a positive and significant direct effect on Purchase Intention

The analysis reveals that Influencer Credibility has a positive and significant direct effect on Purchase Intention ($\beta = 0.474$, $t = 6.416$, $p < 0.001$). This result implies that consumers'

purchase intentions increase as the perceived credibility of influencers increases. Therefore, H3 is supported.

The significant direct relationship also indicates that influencer credibility may function as an immediate evaluative cue when consumers encounter skincare content on TikTok. Expertise, reliability, and the ability to provide understandable product explanations can make the recommendation persuasive even before consumers develop a deeper level of trust. For skincare products, demonstrations of product use, explanations of ingredients, disclosure of skin type, and realistic descriptions of product outcomes may help consumers assess the recommendation more quickly. Consequently, a credible influencer can directly stimulate purchase intention by reducing the complexity of consumers' product evaluations (Weismueller et al., 2020; Woodroof et al., 2020; Lou & Yuan, 2019).

This indicates that credible influencers can directly encourage consumers' willingness to purchase recommended skincare products. The result suggests that consumers may rely on influencers' expertise and reliability when evaluating product-related information. This finding is in line with Cheah et al., (2024), who reported that changes in influencer credibility significantly influence consumers' purchase intentions. Therefore, influencer credibility functions not only as a source of information but also as a persuasive factor that directly shapes consumer behavioral intentions. This means that while the S-O-R framework highlights the role of internal psychological processes in shaping behavioral responses, influencer credibility can also directly influence consumers' purchase intentions in the context of skincare products promoted through TikTok Shop. The significant direct effect observed in this study suggests that consumers may rely on influencers' perceived expertise and trustworthiness as immediate cues when forming purchase intentions (Garg & Bakshi, 2024; AlFarraj et al., 2021; Javed et al., 2024).

Trust in Influencers significantly mediates the relationship between Influencer Credibility and Purchase Intention

The indirect effect analysis demonstrates that Trust in Influencers significantly mediates the relationship between Influencer Credibility and Purchase Intention ($\beta = 0.322$, $t = 5.516$, $p < 0.001$). This finding indicates that influencer credibility enhances purchase intention not only directly but also indirectly through the development of trust in influencers. Since both the direct and indirect effects are significant, Trust in Influencers acts as a partial mediator in this relationship. Therefore, H4 is supported.

The partial mediation result demonstrates that influencer credibility affects purchase intention through two complementary mechanisms. First, credibility directly provides consumers with persuasive cues when evaluating skincare recommendations. Second, credibility indirectly increases purchase intention by developing trust in the influencer. In the skincare context, trust helps consumers translate technical information and promotional claims into confidence regarding product safety, suitability, and expected effectiveness. However, because the mediation is partial, trust does not completely explain the relationship. Some consumers may form purchase intentions directly from the influencer's perceived expertise, reliability, presentation quality, or ability to provide convincing product evidence.

The findings confirm that Trust in Influencers mediates the relationship between Influencer Credibility and Purchase Intention. This mechanism is consistent with the Stimulus–Organism–Response (S-O-R) theory, in which influencer credibility acts as the stimulus (S), trust in influencers represents the organism (O), and purchase intention serves as the response (R). In this process, consumers first evaluate the credibility of influencers before developing trust, which subsequently increases their intention to purchase skincare products promoted on TikTok Shop. Given the relatively high perceived risk associated with skincare products, consumers often require confidence in the integrity, honesty, and reliability of influencers before acting on their recommendations. This finding is consistent with Alcántara-Pilar et al. (2024) and Kwiatek et al., (2021), who identified trust as a key mechanism through which influencer credibility translates

into favorable consumer responses. However, the results also indicate that trust functions as a partial rather than a full mediator, suggesting that influencer credibility can influence purchase intention both directly and indirectly through trust. Therefore, trust strengthens the effect of influencer credibility on purchase intention but does not fully explain the relationship between the two constructs.

The findings demonstrate that influencer marketing for skincare products should not rely solely on popularity or the number of followers. Credibility must be supported by relevant product knowledge, transparent communication, consistent recommendations, and responsible explanations of product use and limitations. Skincare brands should therefore collaborate with influencers who can provide accurate and balanced information rather than making exaggerated claims. This approach is important not only for increasing purchase intention but also for establishing sustainable consumer trust in influencer-based marketing on TikTok Shop.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that Influencer Credibility significantly and positively affects both Trust in Influencers and Purchase Intention toward skincare products promoted through TikTok Shop among consumers in Padang City. Trust in Influencers was also found to have a significant positive effect on Purchase Intention and to partially mediate the relationship between Influencer Credibility and Purchase Intention. These findings indicate that consumers are more likely to develop purchase intentions when influencers are perceived as credible and trustworthy. The results further highlight the importance of credibility and trust as key determinants of consumer behavior in social commerce environments. Therefore, influencers should maintain their expertise, honesty, and consistency when delivering product-related information, while skincare brands should prioritize collaboration with credible influencers to enhance marketing effectiveness and consumer purchase intention.

SUGGESTION

Future studies are encouraged to extend the proposed model by incorporating additional variables, such as parasocial relationships, electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM), perceived value, brand image, and brand awareness, as well as examining different product categories and broader populations to provide a more comprehensive understanding of consumer behavior in influencer-based digital marketing.

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