



The Strategic Role of Influencers in Driving Online Buying Behavior

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Abstract : The development of social media has made influencers a digital marketing strategy capable of influencing consumers' online purchasing behavior. This study aims to analyze the influence of influencer experience, influencer suitability, influencer attractiveness, and influencer content usefulness on online purchasing behavior and examine the moderating role of influencer-follower congruence. The study used a quantitative approach with a longitudinal survey design. The study population was active social media users who had received skincare product recommendations from influencers, with a sample of 100 respondents selected using purposive sampling. Data were collected through an online questionnaire using a five-point Likert scale, then analyzed using binary logistic regression and stepwise moderation analysis. The results showed that influencer experience, influencer suitability, influencer attractiveness, and influencer content usefulness significantly influenced online purchasing behavior. Furthermore, influencer-follower congruence was shown to moderate the relationship between influencer experience and online purchasing behavior, but did not moderate the relationship between influencer content usefulness and online purchasing behavior. This study concluded that the effectiveness of influencer marketing is determined more by experience, credibility, and the usefulness of the information provided than by visual appeal alone, while the congruence between influencers and followers only strengthens the influence of influencer experience on online purchasing behavior.

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Introduction

The development of digital technology has driven significant changes in consumer behavior, particularly through a shift from offline shopping to online platforms. This change is driven by easy access to information, a wide range of product choices, and the time and cost efficiencies offered by digital platforms. In this context, digital marketing through social media has become a strategy that plays a crucial role in influencing online consumer purchasing behavior. Social media is no longer solely used as a promotional tool but also as a space for interaction, information exchange, and the formation of consumer perceptions of a brand (Venciute et al., 2023). Relevant, interactive, and credible content can increase consumer engagement, thus driving online purchasing interest and decisions (Belanche et al., 2021). Furthermore, social media has evolved into a marketing communication channel that allows consumers to obtain information, share experiences, and interact with other users in the purchasing decision-making process (Appel et al., 2020).

With the development of social media, influencers have become a crucial player in digital marketing due to their ability to shape perceptions and influence consumer purchasing decisions. Through platforms like Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok, influencers are able to reach large followings, enabling their recommendations to influence online purchasing behavior (Shet et al., 2024). This influence is determined not only by popularity but also by the influencer's experience, expertise, trustworthiness, attractiveness, and ability to build consistent interactions with their followers (Kapitan et al., 2022). Furthermore, influencers act as marketing messengers, requiring them to produce informative, relevant, and engaging content to build authentic relationships with followers and increase the effectiveness of marketing communications (Leung et al., 2022).

Online shopping behavior is a consumer activity in purchasing products or services through digital platforms, with stages that include need recognition, information search, alternative evaluation, purchase decision, and post-purchase behavior. During the information search stage, consumers obtain information not only from e-commerce platforms but also from social media, including content published by influencers. This information shapes product perceptions and influences the evaluation process before a purchase decision is made (Shadah, 2021). This situation has encouraged more companies to utilize influencers as part of their marketing strategy because they are considered to have a greater influence on purchasing behavior than traditional social media marketing (Masuda et al., 2021). Influencers also function not only as a promotional medium but also share personal experiences about products, thereby improving the quality of information received by their followers (Patmawati and Miswanto, 2022; Ao et al., 2023; Borchers and Enke, 2021).

Although various studies have demonstrated the importance of influencers in influencing online purchasing behavior, most previous research has focused on the influencer's trustworthiness, credibility, or physical attractiveness. However, the effectiveness of influencer marketing is also influenced by the influencer's experience, the usefulness of the content they deliver, and the degree of fit between the influencer's characteristics and the identities of their followers. This fit plays a crucial role in determining consumers' acceptance of influencer recommendations and their likelihood of making a purchase (Trisnawati et al., 2025). Furthermore, understanding how influencer expertise shapes recommendation credibility and how trust in influencers impacts purchase intentions remains limited (Hoo et al., 2025). Therefore, there remains a research gap regarding the influence of influencer experience, influencer trustworthiness, influencer attractiveness, and content usefulness on online purchasing behavior, particularly when the relationship is influenced by influencer-follower congruence as a moderating variable (Venciute et al., 2023).

Based on these problems, this study aims to examine the influence of influencer experience, influencer suitability, influencer attractiveness, and influencer content usefulness on online purchasing behavior, as well as to analyze the moderating role of influencer and follower congruence on the relationship between influencer experience and online purchasing behavior and the relationship between influencer content usefulness and online purchasing behavior. This research is important because it provides a more comprehensive understanding of the factors that influence influencer effectiveness in digital marketing, thus providing a basis for companies and business actors in developing more appropriate marketing strategies. The novelty of this study lies in the integrated examination of influencer experience, influencer suitability, influencer attractiveness, and content usefulness in a single research model by placing influencer and follower congruence as a moderating variable to explain online



purchasing behavior (Venciute et al., 2023).

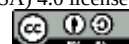
Research Methods

This study used a quantitative approach with a survey and longitudinal design. The survey design was chosen to collect data from respondents through a structured questionnaire, thus depicting the behavior, views, and characteristics of the population at a specific point in time and generating high external validity, allowing the research findings to be generalized (Creswell, 2014). Meanwhile, a longitudinal design was used to observe the relationship between variables by collecting data on the same respondents in two measurement stages, allowing researchers to observe the development of respondents' behavior over time (Sekaran and Bougie, 2016). In the first stage, measurements were made on the variables of influencer experience, influencer suitability, influencer attractiveness, influencer content usefulness, and influencer-follower congruence. In the second stage, online purchasing behavior was measured by identifying whether respondents had purchased skincare products recommended by influencers. Respondents who had made a purchase were given a score of 1, while respondents who had not made a purchase were given a score of 0.

The research instrument used an online questionnaire with a five-point Likert scale consisting of the answer options strongly disagree, disagree, somewhat agree, agree, and strongly agree. The online purchasing behavior variable was adapted from Venciute et al. (2023), while influencer experience refers to Munnukka (2016). The measurement of influencer suitability used an instrument developed by Ryu et al. (2021), influencer attractiveness and influencer content usefulness refer to Venciute et al. (2023), while influencer and follower congruence used instruments from Belanche et al. (2021) and Venciute et al. (2023). Before being used in the study, all instruments were tested for validity using factor loading values with criteria of more than 0.40 so that all indicators were declared valid (Hardani et al., 2020; Sugiyono, 2019). Furthermore, the reliability of the instrument was tested using Cronbach's Alpha with a minimum limit of 0.60 and all variables showed coefficient values above this criterion so that they were declared reliable (Slamet and Wahyuningsih, 2022).

The population of this study was active social media users whose online purchasing behavior for skincare products was influenced by influencers. The sampling technique used nonprobability sampling with a purposive sampling approach, namely selecting respondents based on certain criteria according to the research objectives (Sugiyono, 2019). The determination of the sample size refers to the guidelines of Hair et al. (2010). Using a factor loading value of 0.40, the minimum sample size required in this study was 200 respondents. All research data were obtained from respondents' responses to the online questionnaire.

The research procedure began with the development of an instrument based on the indicators of each research variable, followed by validity and reliability testing to ensure the instrument's quality. After the instrument was declared feasible, the first stage of data collection was conducted to measure influencer experience, influencer suitability, influencer attractiveness, influencer content usefulness, and influencer-follower congruence. Furthermore, the second stage measured online purchasing behavior based on the purchase status of skincare products recommended by influencers. The collected data were analyzed using binary logistic regression because the dependent variable was categorical data, namely purchasing or not purchasing products online. Model feasibility was evaluated using the Hosmer and Lemeshow test, the influence of each independent variable was analyzed through a partial regression coefficient significance test, while the model's ability to explain the dependent variable was evaluated using the Nagelkerke R-Square coefficient of determination.



Results and Discussion

Sample Description

1. Sample Description by Gender

Table 1. Sample Distribution by Gender

Gender	Amount	Percentage
Man	22	22.0
Woman	78	78.0
Total	100	100

Source: Primary Data Questionnaire (2026)

Based on Table 1, it is known that of the 100 respondents, the majority were female (78 people) and male (22 people). The dominance of female respondents indicates that women tend to be more involved in online shopping activities and are more active on social media, which is the primary means for influencers to promote products. This condition suggests that women are likely more frequently exposed to influencer content, thus having a greater opportunity to be influenced in the online purchasing decision-making process.

2. Sample Description by Province

Table 2. Sample Distribution by Province

Province	Amount	Percentage
Central Java	73	73.0
East Java	13	13.0
West Java	3	3.0
DKI Jakarta	4	4.0
Yogyakarta	3	3.0
East Kalimantan	1	1.0
Lampung	1	1.0
North Sumatra	1	1.0
Banten	1	1.0
Total	100	100

Source: Primary Data Questionnaire (2026)

Based on Table 2, it is known that the study respondents came from nine provinces in Indonesia, with a total of 100 respondents. The majority of respondents were from Central Java, namely 73 people (73%). This percentage indicates that this study was dominated by respondents domiciled in Central Java. Therefore, the results of the study more closely describe the online purchasing behavior and perceptions of influencers from respondents from Central Java, while still considering the variation in responses from other provinces. The dominance of respondents from Central Java was not the result of deliberate selection of the research area. The researchers domiciled and have a wider social network in Central Java, so the online questionnaire distribution through social media and social networks reached more respondents in that region than in other provinces. This study did not limit the scope of respondents to a particular province, so the dominance of Central Java more reflects the natural distribution pattern of respondents, rather than predetermined sampling criteria.

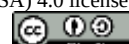
3. Sample Description Based on Education

Table 3. Sample Distribution by Education

last education	Amount	Percentage
High School/Vocational High School or Equivalent	64	64.0
D4/S1	32	32.0
S2	4	4.0
Total	100	100

Source: Primary Data Questionnaire (2026)

Based on Table 3, it is known that of the total 100 respondents, the majority of respondents had a high school/vocational high school (SMA/SMK) or equivalent education level, namely 64 people



(64%). The remaining 36 (36%) consisted of respondents with D4/S1 and S2 education levels. This description shows that research on the strategic role of influencers in driving online purchasing behavior is dominated by respondents with a secondary education background (SMA/SMK or equivalent). This condition indicates that most respondents come from a relatively young age group or are entering higher education or the world of work, who are generally active users of social media and online shopping platforms.

4. Sample Description Based on Job

Table 4. Sample Distribution by Occupation

Work	Amount	Percentage
Students	78	78.0
Private sector employee	11	11.0
Teacher	2	2.0
Civil Servants/State Civil	2	2.0
Apparatus	7	7.0
Businessman		
Total	100	100

Source: Primary Data Questionnaire (2026).

Based on Table 4, it is known that of the total 100 respondents, the majority of respondents were students, namely 78 people (78%). The remaining 22 people (22%) consisted of respondents who worked as private employees, entrepreneurs, teachers, and civil servants. This condition indicates that the majority of respondents came from the student/university group who actively use social media as a means of obtaining information, entertainment, and references before making online purchases. The high intensity of social media use in this group allows them to be more frequently exposed to promotional content created by influencers. Meanwhile, respondents from private employees, entrepreneurs, teachers, and civil servants/ASN provided a variety of perspectives from groups of people who have entered the workforce. Thus, the results of this study describe the perceptions of various occupational groups regarding the influence of influencers in driving online purchasing behavior, although the majority of findings are dominated by the views of respondents who are students, in accordance with the composition of the study sample.

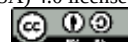
5. Sample Description Based on Income

Table 5. Sample Distribution by Income

Income	Amount	Percentage
< Rp. 500,000	12	12.0
500,001-2,500,000	41	41.0
2,500,001-4,500,000	27	27.0
4,500,001-6,500,000	13	13.0
> Rp. 6,500,000	7	7.0
Total	100	100

Source: Primary Data Questionnaire (2026)

Based on Table 5, it is known that of the total 100 respondents, the majority of respondents have an income of Rp500,001–Rp2,500,000, namely 41 people (41%). Furthermore, respondents with an income of Rp2,500,001–Rp4,500,000 numbered 27 people (27%), followed by respondents with an income of Rp4,500,001–Rp6,500,000 as many as 13 people, respondents with an income of less than Rp500,000 as many as 12 people, and respondents with an income of more than Rp6,500,000 as many as 7 people (7%). These characteristics indicate that most respondents have sufficient purchasing power to conduct online transactions, but still tend to consider price, quality, and product recommendations before making a purchase. In this condition, information and reviews provided by influencers can be a reference in the purchasing decision-making process. This study also involved respondents from various income groups, ranging from low to high income. This diversity provides respondents with the



impression that online purchasing behavior and perceptions of influencers do not originate solely from a specific income level, although the majority of research findings represent respondents with incomes in the range of IDR 500,001–IDR 2,500,000, in accordance with the composition of the sample obtained.

Description of Respondents' Responses in Variables

1. Distribution of Respondents' Responses in Online Purchasing Behavior Variables

Table 6. Distribution of Respondents' Responses in Variables in Online Purchasing Behavior

I have purchased the product I wanted	Amount	Percentage
Yes	74	74
No	26	26
Total	100	100

Source: Primary Data Questionnaire (2026)

Based on Table 6, it is known that of the total 100 respondents, 74 people (74%) stated that they had purchased the desired product online, while 26 people (26%) stated that they had not or did not purchase the desired product. These results indicate that the majority of respondents have purchased products through online platforms. The high proportion of respondents who have made purchases indicates that online shopping has become a common behavior among respondents. This condition shows that respondents not only use social media as a means of obtaining information about products, but have also realized that information into a purchase action. Meanwhile, there are still 26% of respondents who have not purchased the desired product. This indicates that not all individuals exposed to information or promotions from influencers immediately take action to purchase. Purchasing decisions can be influenced by various factors, such as needs, financial capabilities, trust in the product, and personal considerations.

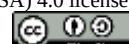
2. Distribution of Respondents' Responses in Product Choice Variables

Table 7. Distribution of Respondents' Responses in Product Variables

Product	Amount	Percentage
Body Serum	4	4.0
Facial Wash	21	21.0
Micellar Water	5	5.0
Serum	25	25.0
Sunscreen	9	9.0
Toner	3	3.0
Total	100	100

Source: Primary Data Questionnaire (2026)

Based on Table 7, it is known that of the total of 100 respondents, the most frequently purchased product online was serum, with 25 people (25%). Next, facial wash was chosen by 21 people (21%), sunscreen by 9 people (9%), micellar water by 5 people (5%), body serum by 4 people (4%), and toner by 3 people (3%). These results indicate that serum is the product most in demand by respondents compared to other skincare products. This indicates that respondents tend to pay more attention to products that have specific benefits to address various skin problems, making serum one of the products frequently promoted and sought after through social media and online shopping platforms. Meanwhile, facial wash also had a fairly high percentage, indicating that basic products in skincare routines remain the main choice for consumers. On the other hand, products such as body serum, micellar water, and toner had relatively lower percentages.



3. Distribution of Respondents' Responses in Influencer Experience Variables

Table 8. Respondents' Responses to the Questionnaire in the Influencer Experience Variable

Respondents' Responses	P1		P2		P3		P4	
	Amount	%	Amount	%	Amount	%	Amount	%
Strongly Agree (SS)	48	48.0	46	46.0	52	52.0	46	46.0
Agree (S)	49	49.0	50	50.0	40	40.0	44	44.0
Quite Agree (CS)	3	3.0	4	4.0	8	8.0	10	10.0
Disagree (TS)	0	0	18	18.0	0	0	0	0
Strongly Disagree (STS)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Primary Data Questionnaire (2026)

Table 8 shows that the majority of respondents agreed with indicators PI1, PI2, PI3, and PI4. A response to indicator PI1 indicates that the influencer understands the product being promoted. A response to indicator PI2 indicates that the influencer is competent in providing product information. A response to indicator PI3 indicates that the influencer is considered an expert on the product being promoted. A response to indicator PI4 indicates that the influencer has sufficient experience to provide statements about the product. This indicates that respondents agree that influencer experience can influence online purchasing behavior.

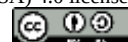
4. Distribution of Respondents' Responses in the Influencer Eligibility Variable

Table 9. Respondents' Responses to the Questionnaire in the Influencer Eligibility Variable

Respondents' Responses	KI1		KI2		KI3		KI4		KI5	
	Amount	%	Amount	%	Amount	%	Amount	%	Amount	%
Strongly Agree (SS)	44	44.0	40	40.0	47	47.0	48	48.0	42	42.0
Agree (S)	41	41.0	51	51.0	46	46.0	44	44.0	54	54.0
Quite Agree (CS)	15	15.0	9	9.0	7	7.0	8	8.0	4	4.0
Disagree (TS)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Strongly Disagree	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Primary Data Questionnaire (2026)

Table 9 shows that the majority of respondents agreed with indicators KI1, KI2, KI3, KI4, and KI5. Responses to indicator KI1 indicate that influencers must be honest. Responses to indicator KI2 indicate that influencers disclose information sincerely. Responses to indicator KI3 indicate that influencers possess expertise in their field. Responses to indicator KI4 indicate that influencers have a large following and subscribers. Responses to indicator KI5 indicate that influencers possess good content creation skills. This indicates that respondents agree that online purchasing behavior is influenced by the suitability of influencers.



5. Distribution of Respondents' Responses in the Influencer Attractiveness Variable

Table 10. Respondents' Responses to the Questionnaire in the Influencer Attractiveness Variable

Respondents' responses	KIN1		KIN2		KIN3		KIN4	
	Amount	%	Amount	%	Amount	%	Amount	%
Strongly Agree (SS)	47	47.0	42	42.0	37	37.0	36	36.0
Agree (S)	44	44.0	51	51.0	51	51.0	54	54.0
Quite Agree (CS)	9	9.0	7	7.0	12	12.0	10	10.0
Disagree (TS)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Strongly Disagree	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Primary Data Questionnaire (2026)

Table 10 shows that the majority of respondents agreed with indicators KIN1, KIN2, KIN3, and KIN4. Responses to indicator KIN1 indicate that the influencer is highly attractive. Responses to indicator KIN2 indicate that the influencer has an attractive style. Responses to indicator KIN3 indicate that the influencer is beautiful. Responses to indicator KIN4 indicate that the influencer has attractive physical appearance. This indicates that respondents agree that online purchasing behavior is influenced by the attractiveness of influencers.

6. Distribution of Respondents' Responses in Influencer Content Usefulness Variables

Table 11. Respondents' Responses to the Questionnaire in the Influencer Content Usefulness Variable

Respondents' responses	KKI1		KKI2		KKI3		KKI4	
	Amount	%	Amount	%	Amount	%	Amount	%
Strongly Agree (SS)	45	45.0	45	45.0	9	9.0	34	34.0
Agree (S)	50	50.0	48	48.0	51	51.0	59	59.0
Quite Agree (CS)	5	5.0	7	7.0	40	40.0	7	7.0
Disagree (TS)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Strongly Disagree	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Primary Data Questionnaire (2026)

Table 11 shows that the majority of respondents agreed with the indicators KKI1, KKI2, KKI3, and KKI4. Responses to KKI1 indicate that influencer content has value and aligns with the respondents' values. Responses to KKI2 indicate that influencer content is considered good. Responses to KKI3 indicate that influencer content provides useful advice, recommendations, and insights. Responses to KKI4 indicate that influencer content helps consumers make product purchasing decisions. This indicates that respondents agree that online purchasing behavior is influenced by the usefulness of influencer content.

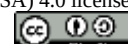
7. Distribution of Respondents' Responses in Influencer and Follower Congruence Variables

Table 12. Respondents' Responses to the Questionnaire in the Influencer Follower Congruence Variable

Respondents' Responses	KIF1		KIF2		KIF3		KIF4	
	Amount	%	Amount	%	Amount	%	Amount	%
Strongly Agree (SS)	32	32.0	39	39.0	36	36.0	37	37.0
Agree (S)	60	60.0	55	55.0	56	56.0	57	57.0
Quite Agree (CS)	8	8.0	6	6.0	36	36.0	5	5.0
Disagree (TS)	0	0	0	0	1	1.0	1	1.0
Strongly Disagree (STS)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Primary Data Questionnaire (2026)

Table 12 shows that the majority of respondents agreed with indicators KIF1, KIF2, KIF3, and KIF4. A response to indicator KIF1 indicates that the influencer reflects the respondent's lifestyle. A



response to indicator KIF2 indicates that the influencer aligns with the respondent's personality. A response to indicator KIF3 indicates that the respondent can identify with the influencer. A response to indicator KIF4 indicates that the respondent would be more likely to purchase a product if the influencer had their own brand. This indicates that respondents agree that online purchasing behavior is influenced by the congruence between influencers and followers.

Data analysis

1. Logistic Regression Analysis

A. Logistic Regression Analysis of the Influence of Influencer Experience, Influencer Suitability, Influencer Attractiveness, and Influencer Content Usefulness on Online Purchasing Behavior

Table 13. Results of logistics analysis

Variables	Coefficient of Determination		Test Signification Model	Coefficient Significance Test Regression
	Cox & Snell	Nagelkarke	(Hosmer & Lemeshow Test)	P
	Snell R Square	R Square		
	0.240	0.352	0.016	
Influencer Experience				0.025
Influencer Eligibility				0.033
Influencer Attraction				0.009
The Usefulness of Influencer Content				0.012

Source: Primary Data Questionnaire (2026)

Table 13 states that influencer experience has a significant effect on online purchasing behavior ($p= 0.025$; $p<0.05$). Therefore, hypothesis H1 is supported. Influencer suitability has a significant effect on online purchasing behavior ($p= 0.033$; $p<0.05$). Therefore, hypothesis H2 is supported. Influencer attractiveness has a significant effect on online purchasing behavior ($p= 0.009$; $p<0.05$). Therefore, hypothesis H3 is supported. Influencer content usefulness also has a significant effect on online purchasing behavior ($p= 0.012$; $p<0.05$). Therefore, hypothesis H4 is supported. Thus, all independent variables, namely influencer experience, influencer suitability, influencer attractiveness, and influencer content usefulness are confirmed to have a significant positive effect on online purchasing behavior.

B. Logistic Regression Analysis of the Moderating Role of Influencer-Follower Congruence in the Relationship Between Influencer Experience and Online Purchasing Behavior

Table 14. Results of the test of the moderating role of Influencer Congruence

Stage Test	Variables	Coefficient of Determination		Test Significance Model	Significance Test Coefficient Regression
		Cox & Snell	Nagelkarke	(Hosmer & Lemeshow Test)	P
		R Square	R Square		
1.	Influencer Experience	0.077	0.112	0.124	0.006
2.		0.080	0.117	0.877	0.005



	Influencer Experience				0.541
	Influencer-Follower Congruence				
		0.147	0.215	0.334	
3.	Influencer Experience				0.011
	Congruence <i>Influencer Followers</i>				0.023
	Interaction				0.008

Source: Primary Data Questionnaire (2026)

Table 14 shows that the influencer experience construct significantly influences online purchasing behavior ($p=0.006$; $p<0.05$). Therefore, in the second stage regression, influencer-follower congruence did not significantly influence online purchasing behavior ($p=0.541$; $p>0.05$), and in the third stage regression, the interaction construct of influencer experience and influencer-follower congruence significantly influenced online purchasing behavior ($p=0.008$; $p<0.05$), then the influencer-follower congruence variable is a pure moderator between the influencer experience variable and online purchasing behavior. Therefore, hypothesis 5 is supported.

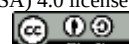
C. Logistic Regression Analysis of the Moderating Role of Influencer-Follower Congruence in the Relationship Between Influencer Content Usefulness and Online Purchasing Behavior

Table 15. Results of the test of the moderating role of Influencer Congruence

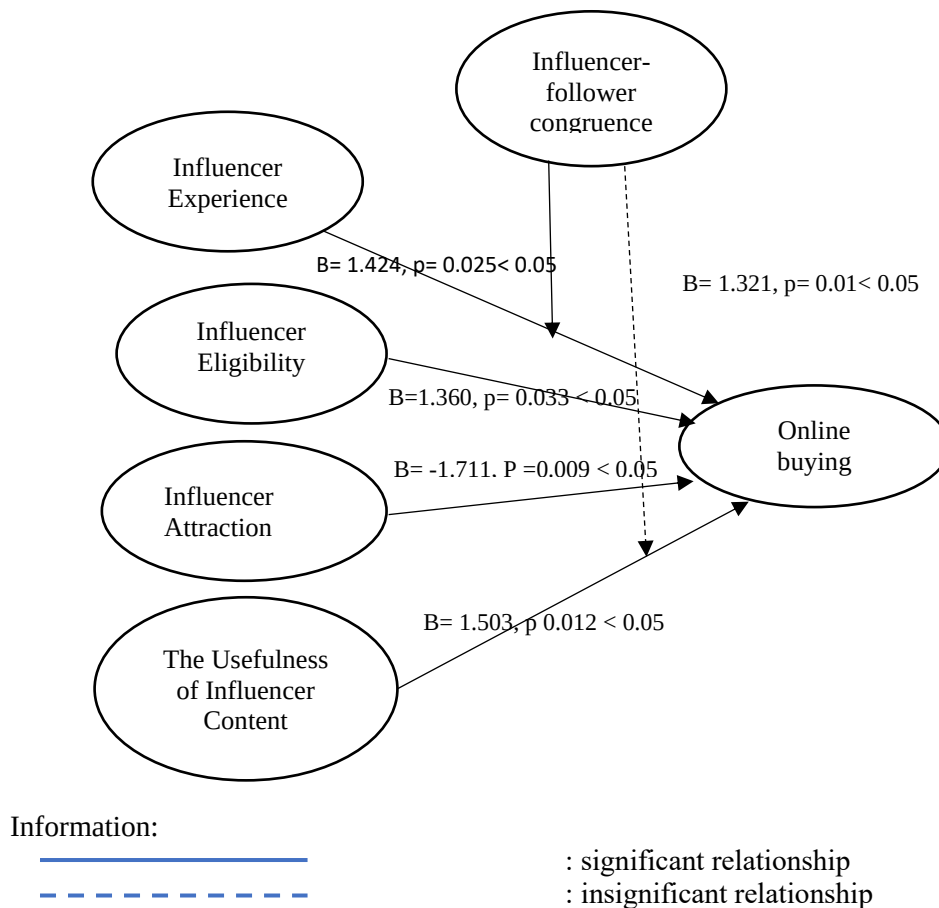
Stage Test	Variables	Coefficient of Determination		Test Significance Model	Significance Test Coefficient Regression
		Cox & Snell R Square	Nagelkarke R Square	(Hosmer & Lemeshow Test)	P
1.	Usefulness Influencer Content	0.087	0.127	0.922	0.004
2.	Usefulness Influencer Content	0.089	0.130	0.877	0.004
	Influencer-Follower Congruence				0.672
3.	Usefulness Influencer Content	0.090	0.132	0.665	0.498
	Congruence <i>Influencer Followers</i>				0.768
	Interaction				0.727

Source: Primary Data Questionnaire (2026)

Table 15 shows that the construct of influencer content usefulness has a significant effect on online purchasing behavior ($p = 0.004$; $p < 0.05$). Therefore, Hypothesis 1 is supported. Since in the second stage regression, influencer-follower congruence did not have a significant effect on online



purchasing behavior ($p = 0.672$; $p > 0.05$), and in the third stage regression, the interaction construct of influencer content usefulness and influencer-follower congruence also did not have a significant effect on online purchasing behavior ($p = 0.727$; $p > 0.05$), then the variable of influencer-follower congruence does not moderate the relationship between the variable of influencer content usefulness and online purchasing behavior. Therefore, Hypothesis 6 is not supported. Based on the results of the data analysis above, the research model can be displayed in Figure 1.



Discussion

The Influence of Influencer Experience on Online Purchasing Behavior

The hypothesis testing in this study shows that influencer experience has a positive effect on online purchasing behavior. This is indicated by a coefficient value (B) of 1.424 with a significance value (B) of 0.025, less than 0.05, and a Wald value of 5.011. Therefore, the first hypothesis (H1) in this study is accepted. The results of this study confirm previous research explaining that the perceived experience of an influencer has a direct positive impact on purchasing behavior. This shows that consumers follow the advice of competitive supporters online before purchasing (Venciute et al., 2023). The higher the experience of an influencer, the greater consumer trust in their recommendations, thus encouraging online purchasing decisions (Al-Mu'ani et al., 2023).

This is also supported by Chavare et al. (2025), who found that consumers tend to be more trusting and encouraged to make purchases when influencers are perceived as knowledgeable and experienced. This is because the influencer's proven experience makes consumers feel less risky about purchasing. Clear product explanations from influencers help consumers make decisions with more confidence.

Therefore, influencer experience plays a crucial role in fostering trust and encouraging pre-purchase behavior.

Influencers' experience is one of the main reasons consumers trust them, along with their honesty and charisma. This research shows that trust is also influenced by experience, potentially encouraging consumers to actually purchase a product. Even for important or expensive products, consumers prefer to rely on the influencer's experience, rather than simply feeling emotionally connected to followers (Tripopsakul and Hoonsopon, 2025).

The Influence of Influencer Suitability on Online Purchasing Behavior

The hypothesis testing in this study shows that Influencer Feasibility has a positive effect on Online Purchasing Behavior. This is indicated by a coefficient value (B) of 1.360 with a significance value of 0.033, which is smaller than 0.05, and a Wald value of 4.561. Therefore, the second hypothesis (H2) in this study is accepted. Consumers tend to be more likely to trust and be influenced by product recommendations when influencers are perceived as honest, sincere, and reliable. Therefore, a high level of influencer feasibility will increase the chances of consumers following the recommendation and deciding to make an online purchase. In addition, influencer feasibility also helps shape positive consumer attitudes towards the posted product, which ultimately encourages consumers to make a purchase (Al-Mu'ani et al., 2023). Khurana et al. (2025), who stated that influencer feasibility, reflected in their honesty, sincerity, and reliability, plays an important role in building consumer trust in a brand, which then encourages consumers to be more confident and ultimately decide to make an online purchase.

When followers perceive an influencer as credible, they tend to view their product recommendations not as mere promotions but as honest and truthful information. Therefore, the message conveyed is more easily accepted and trusted. This credible perception not only impacts followers' assessment of the influencer but also contributes to a positive image of the recommended brand, ultimately encouraging followers to be more confident and bold in making online purchases (Fowler and Thomas, 2023).

However, this contradicts the research results of Venciute et al., (2023) which found that influencer suitability was not proven to have a significant influence on purchasing behavior, even when considering the suitability between influencer and followers. This occurs because in the context of influencer marketing, followers tend to focus more on the usefulness of the content shared and the experience or competence of the influencer, so that the aspect of how honest or trustworthy an influencer is becomes less decisive in their decision to actually make a purchase. Followers seem to consider more what the influencer's content offers than how trustworthy the influencer is.

The Influence of Influencer Attractiveness on Online Purchasing Behavior

The hypothesis tested in this study is that Influencer Attractiveness influences Online Buying Behavior. This is indicated by a coefficient (B) value of -1.711 with a significance value of 0.009, less than 0.05, and a Wald value of 6.834. Therefore, the third hypothesis (H3) in this study is rejected. However, the negative direction of the coefficient indicates that Influencer Attractiveness actually has a negative effect on Online Buying Behavior, contrary to the previously hypothesized positive direction.

The results of this study indicate that influencer attractiveness is not always the primary factor driving consumers to make online purchases. Consumers tend to be increasingly critical in evaluating the information conveyed by influencers. Physical appearance or strong visual appeal do not necessarily increase consumer trust in the promoted product. Instead, consumers consider the quality of the information, the honesty of the reviews, and the usefulness of the content. In fact, influencers who overly emphasize visual imagery can create the perception that the content is more image-oriented than objectively conveying product information (Asriani et al., 2025).

Followers don't need to find influencers attractive to purchase a product; they care more about how useful the content they post is. While attractiveness is considered an important feature in terms of physical characteristics and advertising messages, it is also considered a relevant factor in purchasing decisions (Venciute et al., 2023). Hani et al. (2018) found that attractiveness only helps increase consumer recall of advertisements, but is not strong enough to drive purchasing decisions. This suggests that consumers place more importance on the usefulness of the information provided by influencers than on their physical appearance.



On the other hand, these results contradict several other studies that have found that attractiveness plays a significant role in driving purchases. Attractiveness is one of the key factors in an influencer's success, as it can capture the audience's attention and reinforce the message conveyed. When consumers perceive an influencer as visually and personally appealing, they become more interested in the content shared, thus fostering a positive attitude toward the product and ultimately increasing purchase decisions (Zhao et al., 2024). The more attractive an influencer is, the greater the emotional connection followers feel, thus increasing trust in product recommendations and encouraging purchases (Masuda et al., 2022).

The Influence of Usefulness of Influencer Content on Online Buying Behavior

The results of this study indicate that the usefulness of influencer content has a positive effect on online purchasing behavior. This suggests that content usefulness is crucial in influencer marketing, as it can be seen as a trust signal that helps convey valuable messages for followers seeking product information (Venciute et al., 2023). The higher consumers' perceptions of the usefulness of the information conveyed by influencers, the greater the likelihood of consumers considering and purchasing the promoted product (Subagio and Rachmawati 2020). Furthermore, Pan et al. (2024) explain that the effectiveness of influencer marketing is influenced by the content's ability to provide valuable information to consumers. Content that is relevant, informative, and able to assist the decision-making process has been shown to increase positive consumer responses and encourage purchasing intentions and behavior.

The Moderating Role of Influencer-Follower Congruence in the Relationship Between Influencer Experience and Online Purchasing Behavior

The results of the stepwise moderation analysis showed that influencer experience significantly influenced online purchasing behavior ($p = 0.006$), while influencer-follower congruence did not show a significant direct effect ($p = 0.541$). However, when the interaction between influencer experience and influencer-follower congruence was entered in the third stage, the result was significant ($p = 0.008$). This pattern is consistent with the pure moderator identification criteria, namely that a variable is classified as a pure moderator if it interacts significantly with the predictor variable but does not have a significant direct relationship with the criterion variable. This means that influencer-follower congruence in this study does not function as a direct predictor of online purchasing behavior, but rather as a condition that strengthens or weakens the relationship between influencer experience and online purchasing behavior. (Roland Helm and Antje Mark, 2012)

In a study by Venciute et al. (2023), it was shown that influencer-follower congruence positively moderated the relationship between perceived influencer experience and purchasing behavior. Therefore, for followers who are congruent with their influencers, the impact of influencer experience on purchasing behavior will be higher, while people tend to rely on experience to lead to a positive attitude towards the promoted product. Koay and Lim (2025) found that the congruence effect in influencer marketing on social media works through a moderating mechanism on online purchasing behavior, not as a direct influence pathway. This strengthens the argument that followers are not solely influenced by the presence or absence of their compatibility with influencers, but that compatibility only becomes relevant when interacting with other attributes of the influencer, in this case experience.

The Moderating Role of Influencer-Follower Congruence in the Relationship Between Influencer Content Usefulness and Online Purchasing Behavior

The results of the stepwise moderation analysis showed that influencer content usefulness had a significant positive effect on online purchasing behavior ($p = 0.004$). The results of the moderation test in the second and third stage regressions showed that influencer-follower congruence had no significant effect on online purchasing behavior ($p = 0.672$), and the interaction between content usefulness and influencer-follower congruence was also insignificant ($p = 0.727$).

The usefulness of information in content is the strongest predictor in driving customer engagement on social commerce platforms, where consumers place high value on detailed, accurate, and



comprehensive product information when making purchasing decisions, confirming that information in content plays a more decisive role than mere visual appeal (Herzallah et al., 2025). This study is supported by De Araujo et al. (2026) who found that the informative value of content significantly influences attitudes and brand values with a large effect size, while a person's physical attractiveness and popularity were not proven significant, so that useful and informative content can be understood as a more consistent factor in driving consumer evaluations and purchasing behavior than the attributes of the message source itself. Referring to the moderator identification criteria of Sharma et al. (1981), the failure to meet the requirements for significant interaction indicates that congruence is not a moderating variable in this relationship. Koay and Lim (2025) found that influencer follower congruence, even at a high level, does not automatically drive purchasing behavior unless reinforced by other psychological variables. This strengthens the argument that the role of congruence as a moderator is conditional, not universally applicable to all types of relationships in influencer marketing.

However, this contradicts the research of Venciute et al. (2023) which explains that influencer follower congruence positively moderates the relationship between perceived content usefulness of influencer social media content and purchasing behavior, so that for followers who are congruent with influencers, the impact of content usefulness on purchasing behavior will be higher.

Conclusion

This study proves that influencer experience, influencer suitability, influencer attractiveness, and influencer content usefulness significantly influence online purchasing behavior of skincare product consumers. Logistic regression results show that influencer experience, influencer suitability, and content usefulness have a positive influence on online purchasing behavior, while influencer attractiveness has a significant negative influence. These findings indicate that consumers tend to consider the competence, credibility, and usefulness of the information provided by influencers more than visual appeal alone. Furthermore, congruence between influencers and followers is shown to act as a pure moderator in the relationship between influencer experience and online purchasing behavior, but does not moderate the relationship between influencer content usefulness and online purchasing behavior. These results indicate that the congruence of characteristics between influencers and followers is a factor that strengthens the influence of influencer experience on purchasing decisions, but does not necessarily strengthen the usefulness of the content received by consumers.

This study still has several limitations, namely the relatively limited sample size and the predominance of respondents from Central Java. Therefore, generalization of the results requires caution. The majority of respondents were also students, so a wider range of consumer behavior characteristics were not fully represented. Future research is recommended to involve a larger number of respondents with a more even distribution across regions, using a probability approach, and testing product categories other than skincare. The addition of variables such as parasocial relationships, electronic word of mouth, brand trust, or perceived authenticity could also enrich the research model. Practically, companies need to select influencers with experience, credibility, and the ability to produce informative content relevant to the characteristics of target consumers to optimize the effectiveness of influencer marketing strategies in increasing online purchasing behavior.

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