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Analysis of the Effectiveness of Micro-Influencers in Improving Gen Z Consumers' Purchasing Decisions (Case Study: Indonesian Local Skincare Brands)

Anggun Rianda Putri

Faculty of Economics, Digital Business Program, Universitas Dharma Indonesia, Jl. Raya Serang

Km. 18.2 Sukanegara, Kec. Cikupa, Tangerang, Banten - Indonesia postal code 15710

Email*: anggun.rianda.putri@undhi.ac.id

ABSTRACT

This study examines the effectiveness of micro-influencers in shaping the purchase decisions of Generation Z consumers toward local skincare brands in Indonesia. A quantitative explanatory research design was employed, with data collected through an online questionnaire distributed to 130 Generation Z respondents who actively follow and engage with beauty micro-influencers on Instagram and TikTok. Multiple linear regression analysis using SPSS was conducted to assess the influence of the independent variables. The independent variables include micro-influencer credibility (X_1), content quality (X_2), and interaction intensity (X_3), while the dependent variable is purchase decision (Y). The simultaneous test results indicate that the model is statistically significant, with an F-value of 29.44 exceeding the F-table value of 2.70 and a significance level of 0.000. The coefficient of determination (R^2) is 0.56, indicating that 56% of the variation in purchase decisions is explained by micro-influencer credibility, content quality, and interaction intensity, while the remaining 44% is influenced by other factors such as product price, customer reviews, and brand attractiveness. These findings confirm that micro-influencers play a significant role in influencing purchase decisions, particularly when supported by credible personas and high-quality content. Therefore, local skincare brands are encouraged to collaborate with micro-influencers who demonstrate strong engagement and authenticity to enhance their digital marketing strategies.

Keywords: Micro-Influencers, Buying Decisions, Gen Z, Local Skincare, Digital Marketing.

ABSTRACT

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis efektivitas micro-influencer dalam memengaruhi keputusan pembelian konsumen Generasi Z terhadap merek skincare lokal di Indonesia. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif dengan desain eksplanatori. Data dikumpulkan melalui kuesioner daring yang disebarluaskan kepada 130 responden Generasi Z yang secara aktif mengikuti dan berinteraksi dengan micro-influencer di bidang kecantikan pada platform Instagram dan TikTok. Analisis regresi linear berganda menggunakan SPSS diterapkan untuk menguji pengaruh masing-masing variabel independen. Variabel independen dalam penelitian ini meliputi kredibilitas micro-influencer (X_1), kualitas konten (X_2), dan intensitas interaksi (X_3), sedangkan variabel dependen adalah keputusan pembelian (Y). Hasil uji simultan menunjukkan bahwa model penelitian signifikan secara statistik dengan nilai Fhitung sebesar 29,44 yang lebih besar dari Ftabel sebesar 2,70 serta nilai signifikansi sebesar 0,000. Koefisien determinasi (R^2) sebesar 0,56 menunjukkan bahwa 56% variasi keputusan pembelian dapat dijelaskan oleh kredibilitas micro-influencer, kualitas konten, dan intensitas interaksi, sedangkan 44% sisanya dipengaruhi oleh faktor lain seperti harga produk, ulasan pelanggan, dan daya tarik merek. Temuan ini membuktikan bahwa micro-influencer memiliki peran yang signifikan dalam meningkatkan keputusan pembelian, terutama ketika didukung oleh kredibilitas yang tinggi dan konten yang menarik. Oleh karena itu, merek skincare lokal disarankan untuk bekerja sama dengan micro-influencer yang memiliki tingkat keterlibatan dan autentisitas yang kuat guna memperkuat strategi pemasaran digital.

Keywords: Micro-influencer; Keputusan Pembelian; Generasi Z; Skincare Lokal; Pemasaran Digital

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*Corresponding author: anggun.rianda.putri@undhi.ac.id

INTRODUCTION

The development of digital marketing in recent years shows a significant shift away from traditional ad-based strategies towards a more personalized and interactive approach. One of the strategies that is increasingly dominating is the use of **micro-influencers**, i.e., individuals with a relatively small number of followers but who have a higher level of closeness and trust with their audience. According to Davis (2024), micro-influencers are considered more authentic because of the social closeness built through intense social media interaction, making their recommendations easier for the audience to accept. This makes them one of the essential elements in the modern digital marketing mix.

In the context of the beauty industry, especially local skincare brands in Indonesia, the role of micro-influencers is getting stronger. A report by Tan & Kusuma (2025) shows that more than 70% of Gen Z consumers in Indonesia search for beauty product references through short video content, personal reviews, and tutorials created by micro-influencers on platforms such as Instagram and TikTok. Generation Z is known as a critical, digital-savvy consumer group, and pays close attention to the authenticity of marketing messages; So recommendations from figures they trust often trigger purchase decisions.

The purchase decision itself is a complex process that is influenced by various psychological and social factors. According to Martinez (2025), consumers' purchasing decisions are influenced by perception, the credibility of information sources, and the level of relevance of content to personal needs. In the context of influencer marketing, the credibility, expertise, and attractiveness of influencers are important aspects that can increase consumer confidence in the products being promoted.

In addition to mikro_influencer, the quality of digital content also plays an important role in influencing consumer decisions. Research by Wijaya & Setiadi (2025) confirms that Gen Z consumers are more responsive to informative, aesthetic, and consistent content, especially in the beauty product category. Relevant and targeted content can increase interest, engagement, and purchase decisions.

The high competition in the local skincare market makes brands need to find a communication strategy that is able to reach Gen Z more effectively. Micro-influencers offer advantages in the form of higher engagement rates than celebrities or macro-influencers. According to Gao (2024), high engagement results in stronger emotional connections, thus having a positive impact on purchasing decisions in the digital market.

However, even though micro-influencers are increasingly being used, the effectiveness of this strategy in driving Gen Z purchasing decisions in the local skincare sector has not been studied specifically and in-depth. The limitations of the study provide an opportunity to test the extent to which influencer credibility, content quality, and interaction intensity contribute to purchasing decisions. Therefore, this study was conducted to provide an empirical understanding of the effectiveness of micro-influencers in improving Gen Z consumers' purchasing decisions on local Indonesian skincare brands.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Micro-Influencers in Digital Marketing

Micro-influencers are individuals who have a relatively small to medium number of followers (usually 10,000–100,000), but have a high level of closeness, engagement, and credibility in the eyes of their audience. In the context of digital marketing, micro-influencers are considered more effective than figures with a large number of followers because the communication built is more personal, interactive, and relevant to consumers' daily lives. Putri & Fikriyah (2025). The presence of micro-influencers is important because Generation Z shows a strong preference for figures who are considered authentic, honest, and have more "real" relationships than traditional celebrities. Recommendations submitted by micro-influencers are easier to accept because they are perceived as personal opinions, based on experience, rather than manipulative promotions. In the local skincare industry, micro-influencers play a role in providing education about active ingredients, reviews of product use, and providing visual evidence in the form of before-and-after testimonials. Content like this is a powerful stimulus for Gen Z, who are heavily influenced by visual trust and direct recommendations from the figures they follow.

Gen Z Consumers' Purchasing Decisions

Purchasing decisions are mental and behavioral processes when consumers evaluate needs, consider options, and ultimately decide to buy a product. Generation Z has unique consumption patterns because they were born in the full digital age, so factors such as visual content, real-time interactions, and digital figure recommendations greatly influence their decision-making process.

Gen Z is more responsive to information that is packaged in a short, visual, and interactive format. They are also very sensitive to *brand authenticity*, *peer review*, and *social proof*. In the context of skincare products, they tend to

make purchases after seeing the results of use from others they trust, including micro-influencers.

The Influence of Micro Influencers on Purchasing Decisions

Mikro influencer consists of three main aspects: trustworthiness, expertise, and attractiveness. The higher the perceived credibility, the more likely the audience is to follow the product recommendations given. In skincare products, influencers' expertise in explaining active ingredients, product benefits, and personal experience are factors that strengthen the perception of product quality. Meanwhile, an honest and non-exaggerated communication style increases audience trust.

Gen Z is very sensitive to content that is thought to be created just for sponsorship. Because of this, credibility arises when micro-influencers are able to provide objective reviews, demonstrate real use, and maintain a consistent image.

Content Quality and Its Role in Influencing Consumers

Content quality includes relevance, clarity of information, visual aesthetics, authenticity, and consistency of message delivery. Quality content can increase the perception of product value, shape preferences, and help consumers understand the benefits of a product before buying. On platforms like TikTok and Instagram, Gen Z is more interested in content such as:

- a. product use tutorial,
- b. before–after skincare journey,
- c. Morning/Night Routine,
- d. honest review in a short duration,
- e. Aesthetic content with neat and attractive visuals.

Good content quality is able to create an emotional connection and increase the desire to try the same product, thus triggering a purchase decision.

Intensity of Interaction and Engagement as a Purchasing Driving Factor

Interaction intensity refers to how actively influencers engage in two-way communication with their followers, such as replying to comments, answering questions, conducting live sessions, or creating Q & A sessions. This interaction strengthens the parasocial relationship, which is the one-way psychological relationship that consumers feel towards influencers. This phenomenon is particularly dominant in Gen Z, who often feel close and emotionally connected to their favorite digital figures. The more interaction occurs, the stronger the sense of "closeness" that emerges, and this increases consumer

confidence in product recommendations. Ultimately, intensive interactions increase the likelihood of Gen Z making a purchase of promoted skincare products.

Previous Research

Table 2.1 Summary of Previous Research

| Years | Researcher & Year | Research Title | Method | Key Findings | Relevance to this research |
|-------|--------------------------|---|--|--|--|
| 1 | Shirley & Shirley (2025) | <i>Micro-Influencer Engagement and Purchase Decisions among Indonesian Gen Z on Local Skincare Brands</i> | Quantitative, SEM-PLS, 320 respondents | The involvement of micro-influencers (credibility, expertise, authenticity) has a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions. | Affirm the importance of the elements of credibility and authenticity in the effectiveness of micro-influencers. |
| 2 | Lim & Wong (2024) | <i>The Role of Micro-Influencers in Building Brand Trust in Beauty Products</i> | Online survey, 280 participants | Micro-influencers have a greater influence on <i>brand trust</i> than celebrity influencers. | Supports the argument that micro-influencers are more effective for Gen Z due to more intimate communication. |

| | | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--|--------------------------|--|---|
| 3 | Princess (2023) | <i>The Influence of Influencer Marketing on Local Beauty Product Purchase Decisions</i> | Linear regression | Influencer marketing has a significant effect, but the effect is mediated by <i>brand attitude</i> . | Emphasizing the role of consumer attitudes as a psychological variable that influences the decision-making process. |
| 4 | Yamada & Kim (2025) | <i>Gen Z's Perceived Authenticity and Online Purchase Behavior in the Beauty Industry</i> | Mixed-method | Influencer authenticity is the most decisive factor in the online buying process. | It is the basis that micro-influencers excel because they are considered more authentic. |
| 5 | Rahman & Dewi (2022) | <i>The Effectiveness of Micro-Influencers in Influencing E-WoM and Purchase Intention</i> | SEM-PLS, 250 respondents | Micro-influencers increase positive e-WoM which has an impact on purchase intention. | Demonstrate the direct and indirect relationship of micro-influencers to purchasing decisions. |
| 6 | Chandra & Lestari (2024) | <i>Digital Engagement Metrics and Decision-Making Behavior of Gen Z in Skincare Products</i> | Descriptive quantitative | Engagement rate (likes, comments, saves) is an indicator of trust for Gen Z. | Relevant in explaining how Gen Z assesses the quality of influencers. |

| | | | | | |
|---|------------------|---|-------------------------------|---|--|
| 7 | Octavian (2025) | <i>Short-Form Video Content and Purchase Decisions in the Beauty Sector</i> | Survey, 300 Gen Z respondents | Informative and relatable short videos increase buying interest by up to 41%. | Supports the context of platforms such as TikTok and Instagram Reels on micro-influencer strategies. |
| 8 | Li & Zhao (2023) | <i>Influencer Credibility Model in Skincare Product Purchases</i> | Experiments | Expertise and trustworthiness significantly improve purchasing decisions. | It is a theoretical reference for influencer credibility variables. |

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Analysis of the Effectiveness of Micro-Influencers in Improving Gen Z Consumers' Purchasing Decisions (Case Study: Indonesian Local Skincare Brands)

Types and Approaches to Research

This study uses a quantitative approach with the type of explanatory research. This approach was used to test the influence of variables, namely Mikro_influencer, content quality, and interaction intensity, on Gen Z consumers' purchasing decisions.

Population and Research Sample

Population

The research population includes all Generation Z consumers (aged 17–27 years) in Indonesia who follow beauty micro-influencers and have bought local skincare products.

Sample

The sampling technique uses **purposive sampling** with the following criteria:

1. Respondents were 17–27 years old.
2. Follow at least one beauty micro-influencer (1,000–100,000 followers).
3. Have bought a local skincare brand after seeing influencer recommendations.

The number of samples was set **at 130 respondents**, meeting the formula of minimum **$n \geq 5 \times \text{number of items per variable}$** .

Research Variables and Operational Definitions

Independent Variables

- a. Mikro Influencer (X_1)
- b. Content Quality (X_2)
- c. Interaction Intensity (X_3)

Dependent Variable

Purchase Decision (Y)

Each variable was measured using a Likert scale of 1–5.

Research Instruments

The research instrument is in the form of an online questionnaire (Google Form) consisting of 22 statements. Each statement is measured using a score:

1 = strongly disagree

2 = disagree

3 = neutral

4 = agree

5 = strongly agree

Data Collection Techniques

Data is collected using:

a. Online questionnaire to 130 respondents.

b. Literature study from digital marketing journals, influencer theory, and consumer behavior.

Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis was carried out through SPSS version 26 with the following stages:

Validity Test

Used Pearson Product-Moment correlation formula:

$$r = \frac{n(\sum XY) - (\sum X)(\sum Y)}{\sqrt{n \sum X^2 - (\sum X)^2} \sqrt{(n \sum Y^2 - (\sum Y)^2)}}$$

Reliability Test

Using Cronbach's Alpha:

$$\alpha = \frac{K}{K-1} \left(1 - \frac{\sum S_i^2}{S^2} \right)$$

Criteria:

$\alpha \geq 0.70 \rightarrow$ reliable

$\alpha \geq 0.80 \rightarrow$ very reliable

Classic Assumption Test

Includes:

1. Descriptive statistical analysis to determine the demographic characteristics of respondents and the distribution of variable scores.
2. Validity Test
3. Reliability Test
4. Classic Assumption Test
 - a. Multicollinearity Test (VIF < 10, Tolerance > 0.1)
 - b. Heteroscedasticity Test (Glejser, sig. > 0.05)
5. Multiple Linear Regression Analysis
6. T-test
7. Test F
8. Coefficient of Determination (R^2)

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research Results

Table 1. Respondent Characteristics

| Characteristics | Categories | Quantity (n) | Percentage (%) |
|--|-----------------|--------------|----------------|
| Gender | Male | 42 | 32.30% |
| | Women | 88 | 67.70% |
| Age | 17–19 years old | 36 | 27.70% |
| | 20–22 years old | 58 | 44.60% |
| | 23–25 years old | 36 | 27.70% |
| Frequency of following micro-influencers | Low | 18 | 13.80% |
| | Medium | 72 | 55.40% |
| | Height | 40 | 30.80% |

| | | | |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------|----|--------|
| Frequency of local skincare purchases | 1–2 times/month | 50 | 38.50% |
| | 3–4 times/month | 56 | 43.10% |
| | >4 times/month | 24 | 18.50% |

showing the distribution of the characteristics of 130 Generation Z respondents involved in the study. Based on gender, the majority of respondents were women at 67.7%, while men amounted to 32.3%. In terms of age, the largest group was in the range of 20-22 years (44.6%), followed by the 17-19 years and 23-25 years old groups at 27.7% respectively. The frequency of the following micro-influencers showed that most respondents were in the medium category (55.4%), which indicates moderate engagement in consuming beauty influencer content. Meanwhile, the frequency of buying local skincare is dominated by the category 3–4 times per month (43.1%), indicating that respondents are quite active in buying local skincare products. Overall, the characteristics of respondents showed the profile of Gen Z who actively use social media and have a high tendency to consume local skincare products, so it is relevant to the research focus on the effectiveness of micro-influencers.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics of Variables

| Variable | Number of Items | Red | Minimum | Maximum | Standard Deviation |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|------|---------|---------|--------------------|
| Mikro_Influencer (X_1) | 6 | 4.12 | 3.1 | 4.9 | 0.52 |
| Content Quality (X_2) | 6 | 4.25 | 3.2 | 4.95 | 0.47 |
| Interaction Intensity (X_3) | 5 | 4.03 | 3 | 4.85 | 0.56 |
| Purchase Decision (Y) | 6 | 4.18 | 3.15 | 4.92 | 0.49 |

Table 2 shows the descriptive statistical results of the four research variables. The mean value on the influencer Mikro variable (X_1) was 4.12, which indicates that respondents rated the credibility of micro-influencers to be in the high category. A minimum score of 3.10 and a maximum of 4.90 indicate that respondents' perceptions are relatively evenly distributed and there is no extreme assessment. The content quality variable (X_2) had the highest mean value of 4.25, with a standard deviation of 0.47, indicating that the majority of

respondents gave a positive assessment of the quality of the content presented by micro-influencers. The interaction intensity variable (X_3) showed a mean value of **4.03**, which indicates that the interaction between influencers and followers was in the good category even though the variation was slightly greater ($SD = 0.56$). The purchase decision variable (Y) has a mean value of **4.18**, indicating that Gen Z tends to have a high tendency to purchase after seeing recommendations or content from micro-influencers. Minimum and maximum values that are quite close together indicate the consistency of respondents' answers. Overall, all four variables showed a mean value of > 4.00 , indicating that respondents' perceptions of micro-influencers, content, interactions, and purchasing decisions were in the positive category and supported the research hypothesis that micro-influencers are effective in influencing Gen Z's purchasing decisions.

Validity Test

The validity test was performed using Pearson correlation. An item is considered valid when:

rcalculus>rtable=0.172

Table 3. Validity Test

| Variable | Number of Items | Status |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| Mikro_Influencer (X_1) | 6 | All items are valid |
| Content Quality (X_2) | 6 | All items are valid |
| Interaction Intensity (X_3) | 5 | All items are valid |
| Purchase Decision (Y) | 6 | All items are valid |

Reliability Test

Reliability testing using Cronbach's Alpha with the following criteria:

Table 4. Reliability Test

| Variable | Cronbach Alpha | Remarks |
|----------|----------------|---------|
| | | |

| | | |
|-------|-------|----------|
| X_1 | 0.872 | Reliable |
| X_2 | 0.891 | Reliable |
| X_3 | 0.812 | Reliable |
| Y | 0.885 | Reliable |

Classic Assumption Test

Multicollinearity Test

Table 5. Multicollinearity Test

| Variable | Tolerance | VIVID |
|----------|-----------|-------|
| X_1 | 0.742 | 1.347 |
| X_2 | 0.683 | 1.463 |
| X_3 | 0.716 | 1.393 |

Heteroscedasticity Test

The scatterplot shows a random pattern, and the Glejser test has a sig. > 0.05 so that heteroscedasticity does not occur.

Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

$$Y=6.214+0.381 X_1+0.427 X_2+0.294 X_3$$

Interpretation:

Each 1-point increase in influencer credibility increases a purchase decision by 0.381 points.

Each 1-point increase in content quality increases purchasing decisions by 0.427 points (most powerful).

Each 1-point increase in interaction points increases the purchase decision by 0.294 points.

Partial Significance Test (t-test)

Criteria:

Table 6. T Test

| Variable | t-count | Sig. | Remarks |
|----------------|---------|-------|-------------|
| X ₁ | 3.98 | 0 | Significant |
| X ₂ | 4.65 | 0 | Significant |
| X ₃ | 2.87 | 0.005 | Significant |

All variables have a positive and partially significant effect on the purchase decision.

Simultaneous Significance Test (F Test)

Calculation=29.44>Ftable=2.70 Sig.=0.000

Conclusion:

Simultaneously, influencer credibility, content quality, and interaction intensity have a significant effect on purchasing decisions.

Coefficient of Determination (R²)

R²=0.56

Meaning:

56% of changes in purchasing decisions can be explained by all three micro-influencer variables. 44% are influenced by other factors such as product quality, price, reviews, brand image, and promotion.

Discussion

1. The Influence of Influencer Credibility (X₁) on Purchase Decisions

A t-count value of 3.98 indicates that influencer credibility plays an important role in shaping Gen Z's trust. Followers perceive micro-influencers to be more authentic and close, so their recommendations are considered honest. These results are in line with the **Source Credibility Model theory**, which states that the trust, expertise, and attractiveness of communicators increase the effectiveness of messages.

2. The Influence of Content Quality (X_2) on Purchase Decisions

The t-count value is the highest (4.65), so it is the most dominant factor. Relevant, informative, and consistent visual content makes Gen Z feel confident to try local skincare products. These findings support the theory of the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM), where quality content influences information processing pathways and ultimately triggers purchasing decisions.

3. Effect of Interaction Intensity (X_3) on Purchase Decisions

Active interaction through Q & A, comments, and live reviews increases trust in the product. The t-count value of 2.87 shows that engagement plays an important role in building psychological closeness between influencers and their followers.

4. Simultaneous Influence (X_1, X_2, X_3) on Purchase Decisions

The regression model proved to be robust with $R^2 = 0.56$. This indicates that the micro-influencer strategy:

- a. increase awareness,
- b. create trust,
- c. accelerate consumers at the purchase stage.

This research supports the S-O-R (Stimulus–Organism–Response) theory, where stimuli in the form of content and influencer credibility affect psychological conditions (organisms) and produce responses in the form of purchasing decisions.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Based on the results of a study on the effectiveness of the use of micro-influencers in improving Gen Z consumers' purchasing decisions on local Indonesian skincare brands, the following conclusions were obtained:

- 1. Micro-influencers have been proven to have a significant influence** on Gen Z's purchasing decisions, especially through aspects of content authenticity, engagement, and influencers' personal image that is considered relevant to the audience's lifestyle. Gen Z consumers trust recommendations that are considered honest and natural compared to conventional paid advertising.
- 2. The quality of content** presented by micro-influencers, such as product reviews, usage tutorials, and before-and-afters, makes a great contribution to building **trust and confidence** of potential buyers in the effectiveness of local skincare products.
- 3. The frequency of interactions** such as likes, comments, and influencer responses to followers increases the perception of emotional closeness, encouraging Gen Z to consider recommended products more.

4. **Brand awareness increases** significantly after campaigns involving micro-influencers, mainly due to the stable reach of the content and an active community of followers.
5. The most decisive factor in a purchase decision is **trust** built through long-term relationships between influencers and audiences, not just the number of followers.

Overall, the strategy of collaboration with micro-influencers **is effective** in improving Gen Z consumer purchasing decisions, especially for local skincare brands that require a personal and educational approach.

Suggestions

Advice for Local Skincare Companies/Brands

1. **Choose micro-influencers that match the character of the audience**, not only based on the number of followers, but also on the suitability of the persona, beauty niche, and quality of engagement
2. **Develop long-term campaigns** to strengthen the influencer-followers relationship and build higher trust in the brand.
3. **Provide creative freedom** for influencers to make content look more organic, less rigid, and still reflect the influencer's original communication style.
4. **Strengthen product education programs**, such as the benefits of ingredients, how to use, and the results of use, so that the content feels more informative and convincing.

Suggestions for Further Researchers

1. You can add other variables, such as **brand trust, brand image, or customer satisfaction**, to see a wider relationship.
2. It is recommended to extend the object of research to several different types of skincare products or brands to produce stronger generalizations.
3. The next study could use **an experimental approach or big data analysis** from social media to get more in-depth results about Gen Z's digital behavior.

Advice for Influencers

1. Maintain **the authenticity of reviews** and transparency in brand cooperation so as not to reduce the level of followers' trust.
2. Increase **active interactions** such as answering comments, creating Q&A, and showcasing personal experiences using products.

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