



The influence of influencer marketing and e-wom on purchasing decisions with purchase intention as an intervening variable

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ABSTRACT

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In the digital era, advances in information technology have changed the way consumers seek information before making purchasing decisions. By using purchase intention as an intervening variable, this study seeks to examine how influencer marketing and electronic word-of-mouth (E-WoM) influence purchasing decisions. This objective is based on the need to explain the psychological mechanisms that link digital marketing strategies with consumer buying behavior, as well as answer the differences in previous research results related to the mediating role of purchase intention. This research uses a survey method combined with a quantitative approach. Customers who had experienced influencer marketing and product-related E-WoM were given questionnaires to fill out in order to collect data. To test the relationship between variables, the data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). The findings show that customer purchase intention is significantly influenced by E-WoM. Purchase intention also has no mediating effect on the relationship between influencer marketing and purchase decision. This study and previous research suggest that there is a different role of purchase intention as a mediator in the purchase decision process. For marketing professionals, these findings underscore the importance of effective influencer marketing and E-WoM management strategies to enhance consumer purchase intention and purchase decisions. Selecting influencers who are credible and relevant to the product and encouraging positive reviews from consumers are recommended to improve marketing.

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1. INTRODUCTION

In the digital age, the development of combining communication and information technologies has resulted in major changes in the way consumers obtain information about products before making purchasing decisions. E-WOM are rapidly evolving marketing strategies. With the development of social media, it is now easier for consumers to get product or service recommendations, both from influencers they follow

and from other consumers' opinions and experiences shared online. In addition, technological advancements and innovations in social media facilitate customers' access to information at any time and from any location. With so much information available, consumers are now more likely to rely on recommendations or testimonials from friends, family or influencers they trust, as opposed to conventional advertising. Therefore, companies need to be smarter in harnessing the power of social media and e-WOM to capture consumers' attention and influence their purchasing decisions. A study by (Nielsen, 2023) revealed that 92% of buyers believe that suggestions from other individuals greater than conventional marketing. This confirms that Influencer Marketing and E-WOM play an important role in shaping purchasing decisions.

Wardah products are one of Indonesia's original halal cosmetic brands established in 1995. The survey conducted by Kompas internal team used online tracking research on the Shopee and Tokopedia websites. They managed to find Wardah's sales data for the past year, from July 1, 2021 to July 31, 2022. During the one-year period, Wardah achieved sales revenue on Shopee, Tokopedia, and BliBli of IDR380 billion, IDR50 billion, and IDR25 billion, respectively (kompas.co.id). PT Paragon's brand, Wardah, ranks first as the best-selling local brand, with a market share of 7.65 percent. Unlike the previous brand, Wardah offers make-up products with a more natural feel (Ramadhani, 2022). Wardah, one of the local halal cosmetic brands, has successfully occupied a strategic position in the national beauty industry, mainly due to its ability to target the demographic of young Muslim women who are active on social media, who pay attention to religious and aesthetic values in addition to engaging in digital interactions, especially on social media. Theoretically, this segmentation is highly influenced by the power of influencers and E-WOM in terms of shaping perceptions, increasing purchase intention, and purchase decisions. Therefore, it is crucial to create relevant and effective marketing strategies by considering how the potential power of influencers and E-WOM works in the context of Wardah's consumer segmentation.

Influencer marketing, which uses content creators, is used in Indonesia to implement marketing strategies on social media platforms. Influencer who possess a substantial following on social networking sites are used in influencer marketing. Influencers can interact with Millions of people worldwide by using their influence to promote a business's or products and develop its social media platform (Ishomi et al., 2025). In addition to being a crucial part of the pre-sales phase, marketing influencers also have a significant impact on the opinions and behavior of consumers. The power of influencers is not only limited to the promotion of products or services influencers also have a great influence on the management of brand image and identity. Influencers serve as an easily accessible and trustworthy source of information and product recommendations for their followers in today's digital world, creating an aura of authenticity that is often difficult for traditional advertising to compete with (Mohammadian & Valilai, 2024). Influencer marketing is a strategy of engaging influencers to educate products and facilitate the purchasing decision-making process by consumers (Leung et al., 2022). Successful influencer marketing involves compensating influencers to create, endorse and disseminate content to their followers. This strategy combines traditional marketing methods with modern techniques, combining celebrity endorsements with contemporary content-based marketing approaches (Hakiki et al., 2024). According to Kelman in his work (Shimp & Andrews, 2013) there are several dimensions, namely Credibility which includes two main indicators, namely trust and expertise. In addition, the Attractiveness dimension also includes key indicators consisting of psychological attractiveness, physical attractiveness, and social attractiveness. The last dimension is power, which includes indicators of referent power, expert power, and legitimacy power.

Due to the forces of globalization and information technology, there has been a significant shift in the way consumers obtain and provide information. E-WOM as an

emerging form of information dissemination, has become an important factor influencing consumer decision-making. E-WOM not only spreads information about a company's products and services quickly, but also has a great influence on purchasing behavior and consumer satisfaction. With the increasing use of social media, the influence of eWOM is becoming increasingly evident (Hua et al., 2024). Electronic word of mouth (eWOM) is information that is accumulated and accessible online. Information generated by consumers is utilized by other consumers around the world regarding relevant products and brands in the form of feelings, endorsements, video testimonials, criticisms, comments, ratings, pins, likes, blog posts, and photos about what they like and recommend on Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok which are referred to as eWOM (Ismail et al., 2025) in (Bilal et al., 2021). The definition of eWOM refers to the communication of customer-focused information via an internet platform, which provides internet users with information regarding the characteristics of a particular product, service or company. This interaction can take place between customers, in the form of comments or recommendations on the internet (Lam et al., 2025) in (Melon dan Salvi, 2014). Brands and companies utilize EWOM to showcase their presence on social media, in order to have planned interactions between brands and their customers. EWOM has led to consumers becoming more generalists and more knowledgeable and informed, as well as shifting the decision-making control from brands into the hands of consumers. Shoppers are now given the power to engage or not in certain promotional activities in a one-to-one paradigm. (Ismail et al., 2025) in (Assaker & O'Connor, 2021).

The consumer decision to buy is the stage at which the buyer makes a choice and buys the product. Purchasing decisions are consumer actions to determine preferences among products in a category of choice and choose the most preferred product (Dessully & Barusman, 2025). Purchasing decisions are not just transaction actions but also an integral part of broader consumer behavior, which includes product and service recognition and evaluation of decisions made both before and after the purchase action is taken (Mughni & Susila, 2024). Consumer sentiments and emotions do have a significant impact on purchasing decisions. Following a product evaluation, a person's propensity to buy will improve if they feel content and happy. Good emotions, such as a sense of pleasure or satisfaction, can create a strong emotional bond with a product or brand, which in turn influences purchasing decisions. This shows that consumers' purchasing decisions are not just rational considerations, but are also influenced by how they feel about the product (Eddie Rahmat Taufik, 2023) in (Nugroho dkk, 202). In this context, consumer decision-making is often influenced by various factors, such as needs, preferences, available information and previous experience with a particular product or brand. According to (Kotler & Armstrong, 2016), purchasing decisions consist of several main dimensions, namely product choices which include indicators of product quality, product design, and product benefits. The dimensions of brand choice can be measured by indicators such as brand image, brand loyalty, brand awareness. The supplier choice dimension includes indicators such as place of purchase, supplier reputation, and type of distribution channel. Furthermore, the dimension of purchase time, which includes indicators of the time the purchase was made. In the dimension of the number of purchases, there are indicators including the volume of purchases, the number of units purchased, and the size of the packaging chosen. The last dimension is the payment method which includes indicators of the type of payment, ease of payment, and transaction security.

Purchase interest, a concrete manifestation of consumer behavior, is the desire or impulse to purchase a good or service. Consumers who have shown buying interest can be considered potential buyers, even though they have not actually made a transaction (Mughni & Susila, 2024) in (Audrey Raihan Satrio Jati, 2022). Purchase intention is an example of behavioral intention, which is used to evaluate and predict consumer behavior regarding their attention to a particular brand and intention to buy the product

(Tampubolon, 2025) in (Handriana et al., 2020). Purchase intention occurs when individuals feel interested or compelled to buy a product or service, have a desire to get new or old goods from a particular brand (Hadita Hadita, 2023) in (Adjie, 2023). According to (Kotler & Keller, 2012:503) buying interest consists of several main dimensions, namely, the attention dimension which can be measured through indicators such as reading website advertisements, knowing the product, looking through the catalog, and selecting products in the catalog. After that, the dimension of interest (Interest) Indicators in this stage include storing seller contact information, contacting the seller to find product information, and contacting the seller to buy the item. The Desire dimension can be measured through indicators, namely making online purchase transactions, filling out product purchase forms, sending personal data to sellers, deciding on payment methods.

In this context, it is relevant to examine how the role of influencers and e-WOM influence purchase intention towards certain products, such as Wardah products. This kind of research can provide deeper insights into the effectiveness of Wardah's product marketing strategy, as well as provide useful recommendations to improve consumer purchasing decisions. By utilizing the power of influencers and consumer reviews, companies can design marketing strategies that are more targeted and relevant to audience preferences.

Although various previous studies have examined the influence of influencer marketing and e-wom on purchase decisions, there is still a conceptual gap in explaining the psychological mechanisms that link the two. Most studies focus on the direct relationship without considering the purchase intention variable as a cognitive-emotional process that connects broad stimulus and real decision. In addition, results from previous studies show different results related to the role of purchase intention with some finding a significant mediating effect, while others finding no significant relationship. Therefore, it is important to clarify the contradictions of previous research findings and to examine the role of purchase interest as an intervening variable to improve the understanding of consumer behavior in the digital age. The purpose of this study is to identify and analyze how influencer marketing, E-WOM, and purchase intention influence purchasing decisions. Through this research, it is expected to provide a deeper understanding of how effective influencer marketing and E-WOM are in shaping purchase intention which ultimately influences purchase decisions.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a quantitative methodology, gathering data using the survey method. Using buy intention as an intervening variable, this method was selected to assess the degree to which the independent variables—influencer marketing and E-wom, or e-WOM—influence the dependent variable, which is purchasing decisions. The population in this study were social media users who had been exposed to Wardah product promotional content through influencers and received information or reviews through e-WOM. Based on the data, the majority of respondents (94.6%) are female students aged 18-24 years old. This situation shows that the target audience of influencer marketing and e-WOM is a group of young users who are very active on social media. The results of this study are more reflective of the behavior of young consumers born in the digital era, so the interpretation of consumers with different age characteristics, occupations, and shopping experiences must be done carefully. The sampling technique used was purposive sampling. According to (Sugiono, 2019) purposive sampling is done by setting certain standards. The variables in this study were measured using the approach suggested by (Hair et al., 2019) because the exact population size is unknown, it is recommended that the minimum sample size in quantitative research is 5 to 10 times the number of indicators used. In this study there are 45 indicators, so the minimum sample

size required is 225 respondents ($45 \times 5 = 225$). Primary data was collected through distributing questionnaires using a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree).

The research instrument was compiled based on indicators from previous relevant and validated literature. To ensure that each construct is measured unidimensionally, construct validity testing is carried out through confirmatory factor analysis using the Partial Least Squares - Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) analysis method. The purpose of this study is to test the direct and indirect relationships between independent, intervening, and dependent variables simultaneously, thus providing a more comprehensive picture of the research model and aiming to determine the extent to which the indicators on each variable represent the same construct dimension. The test results in this study are seen from the results of all outer loading indicator values on influencer marketing and e-WOM variables with a value above 0.70, which indicates that each indicator has a significant contribution to the construct it measures, the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value for each construct > 0.50 which indicates convergent validity and the Composite Reliability (CR) value with a minimum limit of 0.70, which means that it shows good internal consistency of the indicators in measuring the same construct.

Conceptual framework of dependent variables, independent variables and intervening variables in Figure 1.

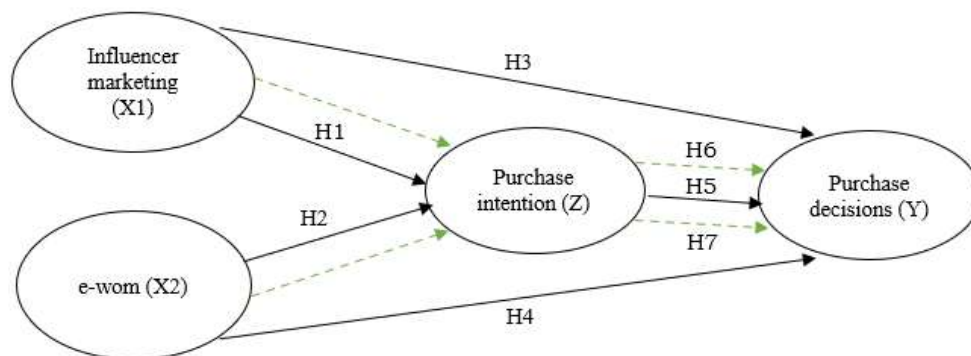


Figure 1. Research Model

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Respondent data used for data analysis were 225 respondents, the characteristics of respondents in this study consisted of gender, education, occupation and age. Most of the respondents were female with a percentage of 83.6%. Their education is mostly D3 / S1, namely 22.2% and their jobs are students with a percentage of 82.7%. Most of them are 18-24 years old with a percentage of 94.6%.

Table 1. Construct validity and reliability measurement

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	Rho_A	AVE
Influencer Marketing (X1)	0.911	0.928	0.913	0.619
E-WOM (X2)	0.890	0.913	0.893	0.566
Purchase Decisions (Y)	0.951	0.956	0.952	0.576
Purchase Intention (Z)	0.954	0.960	0.955	0.646

The results of data analysis in Table 2 show the validity of the indicator statements used in this study. Consequently, it can be said that additional data analysis can be done using the 45 indicators that Table 2 has verified as valid. Each variable's AVE value is greater than 0.5, as shown in Table 2. This shows that each variable used in this study has met the validity of the research and has met the validity and convergence criteria. Each variable's Cronbach's Alpha value is less than 0.70 in Table 2, indicating that all of the variables are dependable according to the Cronbach's Alpha findings. When each variable's rho_A value is more than 0.70, it means that the Composite Reliability Value for each variable also displays 0.70 based on the rho_A findings, so it can be said that all variables fall into the realistic category and can be confirmed for accuracy based on the composite reliability results.

Tabel 2. Discriminant Validity

	Influencer marketing (X1)	E-WOM (X2)	Purchase Decisions (Y)	Purchase Intention (Z)
Influencer marketing (X1)	0.787			
E-WOM (X2)	0.840	0.753		
Purchase Decisions (Y)	0.656	0.692	0.759	
Purchase Intention (Z)	0.559	0.617	0.479	0.804

The Discriminant Validity criteria shown in Table 3 serve as an important indicator for determining model compliance showing that the Discriminant Validity criteria are greater than the AVE criteria. When all variables achieve AVE > 0.70, it can be concluded that Influencer Marketing, E-WoM, Purchase decision and purchase intention all weaken the Discriminant Validity criteria and in Table 3 above shows that each measure can be well evaluated from the perspective of validity, reliability, and data differentiation.

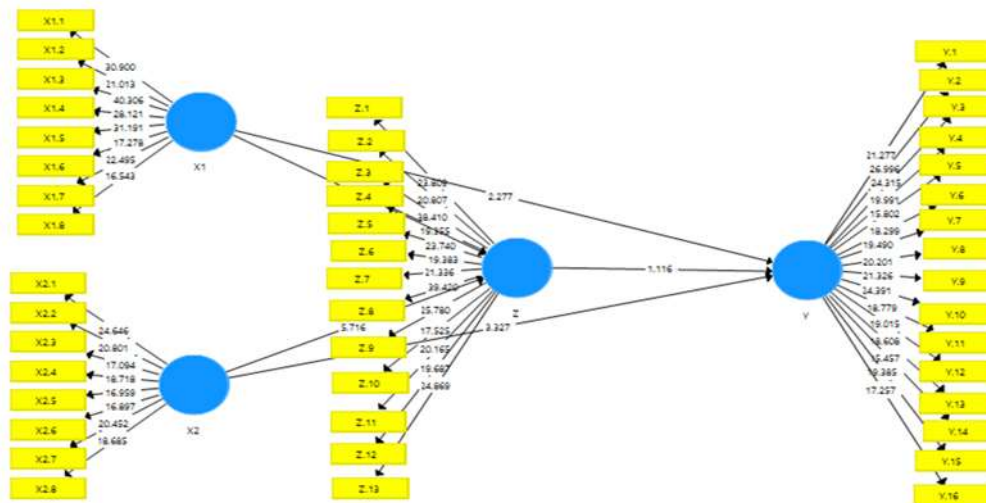


Figure 2. PLS Bootstrapping

The following are the results of hypothesis testing.

Table 3. Hypotheses Testing

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values
X1 -> Y	0.245	0.245	0.105	2.325	0.016
X1 -> Z	0.140	0.135	0.094	1.486	0.106
X2 -> Y	0.445	0.452	0.137	3.256	0.001
X2 -> Z	0.500	0.504	0.091	5.471	0.000

Z -> Y	0.067	0.059	0.062	1.085	0.247
X1 -> Z -> Y	0.009	0.009	0.012	0.816	0.424
X2 -> Z -> Y	0.034	0.030	0.033	1.021	0.268

Based on Table 4 which is used as hypothesis testing, the following section explains that Influencer marketing has a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions because the P value of 0.016 is smaller than 0.05. These findings are consistent with previous studies conducted by (Devi et al., 2024) which states that Influencer Marketing significantly influences Purchasing Decisions because the messages conveyed by Influencers are considered more relevant, easily accepted, and trusted by the audience. As a result, potential buyers are more encouraged to make purchases after being exposed to content from these influencers.

Influencer marketing has no significant effect on purchase intention since the P value of 0.106 is greater than 0.05. These results indicate that although influencer marketing is used to promote a product, it does not directly increase buying interest purchasing from customers. This study is in with research (Hidayati et al., 2024) that Influencer Marketing has no positive effect on Purchase Intention, where influencers may not have a large enough influence to influence consumer purchasing decisions due to lack of trust or relevance and lack of knowledge or experience with the product so that companies need to consider the marketing strategies used and consider other approaches that are more suitable for increasing consumer buying interest.

The P value of 0.001 is less than 0.05, indicating that E-WoM significantly and favorably influences. This finding is in line with the results of research (Rahmawati & Dermawan, 2023) which states that consumers utilize E-WOM as a source of information on online platforms. The better the positive reviews or opinions given by customers, the higher the tendency of consumers to make purchasing decisions. E-WOM not only plays a role in increasing consumer awareness, but also strengthens trust in the products offered. Therefore, companies are advised to implement marketing strategies that optimize the role of E-WOM to effectively drive an increase in consumer purchasing decisions.

Purchase intention is positively and significantly impacted by E-WoM since the P value of 0.000 is less than 0.05. . This result is consistent with research showing that E-WoM has a strong and favorable impact on purchase intention (Anjarwati & Widiartanto, 2022). Consequently, one of the elements influencing buying intents and decisions is E-WoM. Customer confidence, attention, and awareness may all be raised via E-WoM that originates from reliable and pertinent sources.

The P value of 0.247, which is higher than the 0.05 significance level, demonstrated that buying intention has no significant impact on decisions to buy. This finding is in line with the results of research (Meli et al., 2022) which shows that there is no significant relationship between purchase intention and purchase decision. This means that even though consumers have an interest in a product, this does not necessarily directly encourage them to make a purchase. This indicates that there are other factors that may be more dominant in influencing purchasing decisions, such as price, product quality, and the promotional strategies implemented. Therefore, companies are advised not only to focus on increasing purchase interest, but also to strategically strengthen other aspects that have a stronger influence on consumers' final decisions.

In addition, purchase intention also does not act as a mediating variable in the relationship between influencer marketing and purchasing decisions, because the P value of 0.424 does not meet the significance criterion of 0.05. This finding shows that the influence of influencer marketing on purchasing decisions is direct, without going through the purchase intention stage as an intermediary. This can be caused by the high level of consumer trust in influencers or because the promotional strategies are delivered

persuasively and effectively, so as to encourage instant purchases. The unimportance of purchase intention as a mediator in this study is explained by the tendency of digital consumers to respond directly to promotional messages. In this affective and cognitive context, it shows that consumers prefer emotional reactions and immediate belief in influencers or e-WOM reviews, rather than going through a cognitive internalization process that includes the formation of purchase intention. As a result, the decision-making process tends to be faster and more direct towards purchase without going through a clear intention stage. This finding contradicts the results of the study (Waluyo, 2022) which states that purchase intention mediates the relationship between influencers and purchasing decisions. In Waluyo's research, the greater the influence of influencers, the higher the purchase intention formed, which then drives the purchase decision. Therefore, companies need to understand that the presence of influencers can create an instant effect on purchasing decisions, so that marketing strategies can be more directed at the strength of personal branding and the credibility of the influencers themselves. In the context of marketing, particularly on social media, content from influencers serves more as an immediate decision trigger than as a long-term intention builder. Influencers often present content that is visual, personalized and authentic—such as tutorials, testimonials or product unboxing that psychologically creates a social proof and urgency effect. This encourages audiences to buy right away, especially if they are already in the consideration stage or have a relevant need. The insignificance of the effect on purchase intention suggests that consumers do not necessarily interpret influencer content as a source of long-term internal motivation to buy, but rather as a momentary external stimulus that can accelerate purchase decisions. In other words, influencer marketing in this context plays more of a role in directly influencing the action aspect, bypassing the interest stage that usually arises in the conventional decision-making process.

The P value of 0.268 is higher than 0.05, indicating that purchase intention does not moderate the association between E-WoM and purchasing decisions. This means that consumers who receive information from E-WOM tend to make purchasing decisions directly without going through a significant process of forming buying interest. Purchase intention does not significantly influence the association between E-WOM and purchasing decisions as a mediating variable, according to study (Alviansyach et al., 2024). This shows that E-WOM has a strong direct influence, where reviews, recommendations or testimonials from other consumers are able to influence potential buyers instantly. The implication is that digital marketing strategies should focus more on managing and strengthening positive E-WOM, such as encouraging customer reviews, testimonial content, and credible social interactions, as these have been shown to be effective in shaping purchase decisions without the need for an intermediary in the form of purchase intention.

4. CONCLUSION

This study reveals that influencer marketing has a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions, which means that this strategy is effective in encouraging consumers to make purchases. Nevertheless, there was no discernible impact of influencer marketing on consumers' intentions to buy. This finding indicates that consumers can be directly encouraged to buy products due to the influence of influencers, without going through the psychological stage of deep interest or interest in the product first. The result that purchase intent is not a mediator confirms that brand communication strategies on social media platforms should focus on driving purchase action, not just creating interest. Communications need to be direct, assertive and emotionally engaging, as digital consumers react quickly and impulsively to content they trust and find engaging. This can happen because trust in the influencer, the

attractiveness of the content, or the urgency of the promotion offered is more dominant than the internalization process of purchase intention. Based on these results, Wardah marketers should emphasize choosing influencers who have high credibility and strong personal appeal.

Credibility includes expertise, honesty, and value congruence with halal brand identity, while attractiveness includes visual features, lifestyle, and emotional affinity with target consumers, especially young Muslim women. Because content that encourages immediate action, such as video tutorials, accurate reviews, and personal testimonials, is more effective in driving immediate purchase decisions, especially for digital customers who are highly attracted to visuals and opinions of the people they follow. Marketers should also consider that while influencers can drive purchases, building loyalty and long-term purchase intentions also requires a broader approach, such as improving product quality, maintaining brand value, and connecting directly with customers through various digital platforms. Marketers of local halal products such as Wardah can optimize the use of influencers not just as a promotional tool.

This study has several limitations, one of which is because the data was collected through an online survey, which has the potential to cause bias because it only involves respondents who have internet access. In addition, online data collection often takes longer to get a sufficient number of respondents, which may affect the accuracy of the sample, especially if respondent participation is low in a certain period. Another limitation is that if the statements in the survey are too complex, respondents may have difficulty understanding or answering appropriately, which may affect the validity of the results obtained. Online surveys also often rely on respondents' honesty in providing answers, without direct supervision, which may risk affecting the quality of data collected. For future research, researchers are advised to consider other factors that have the potential to act as mediating variables in the relationship between influencer marketing and electronic word of mouth (E-WOM) on purchasing decisions. Using a longitudinal research design or over a longer period of time and involving a wider sample can provide a more in-depth and accurate picture of changes in the influence of influencer marketing and E-WOM over time. In addition, further research can also explore additional variables such as consumer trust, perceptions of product quality, and consumer satisfaction. This aims to enrich the understanding of the factors that influence purchasing decisions, as well as make a more comprehensive contribution to the development of effective marketing strategies.

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