

# Influencer Endorsement and Customer Review on Purchase Intention: Role of Trust as Mediator

**Ni Ketut Ayu Dewitasari**

School of Economics and Business, Telkom University, Indonesia

Email: [ayudewita@student.telkomuniversity.ac.id](mailto:ayudewita@student.telkomuniversity.ac.id)

**Riski Taufik Hidayah**

School of Economics and Business, Telkom University, Indonesia

Email: [riskitaufik@telkomuniversity.ac.id](mailto:riskitaufik@telkomuniversity.ac.id)

Corresponding Email: [riskitaufik@telkomuniversity.ac.id](mailto:riskitaufik@telkomuniversity.ac.id)

## ARTICLE INFO

Research Paper

### Article history:

Received: 25 November 2024

Revised: 15 December 2023

Accepted: 13 January 2024

## ABSTRACT

Wardah as a local brand, offers a variety of sunscreen products to protect the skin from the sun and pollution. Wardah utilizes diverse marketing strategies, including electronic word of mouth, which includes customer reviews and influencer endorsement. However, data from the Top Brand survey indicates a decline in the brand index in the sunblock cream subcategory in the years 2022-2023. Therefore, this research is conducted to understand the influence of Wardah's marketing, whether through influencer endorsement or customer reviews, on the purchase intention of Wardah sunscreen, with the moderating variable of trust in this relationship. The population in this study consists of consumers who are aware of and have an interest in Wardah sunscreen products. The sampling technique employed is non-probability sampling, specifically utilizing the purposive sampling method. All collected data are analyzed using SEM-PLS with Smart-PLS. It was found that customer reviews have a positive and significant influence on the purchase intention of Wardah sunscreen products. Meanwhile, influencer endorsement does not have a significant positive influence on the purchase intention of Wardah sunscreen products. Trust, whether in influencer endorsement or customer reviews, does not exhibit a moderating impact but has a direct influence.

**Keywords:** Customer Review, Influencer Endorsement, Trust, Purchase Intention

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## INTRODUCTION

Moment use internet and *mobile phone* technology increasingly increase then social media followed suit grow with fast (DataIndonesia.id, 2023). Social media works as means or receptacle communication two easy direction interaction between user, used for build image yourself, and also become a marketing medium for company (Andriansyah & Maharani, 2021). Through use of social media in strategy marketing, improvement content about maintenance skin and skincare products have increase awareness Indonesian people will importance nurse skin they. Reported from Statista, revenue in the beauty and care market personal or personal care in Indonesia is sufficient promising, that is reaching US\$ 8.09 billion in 2023 (Kontan, 2023).

The use of skincare products is crucial for Indonesians due to the tropical climate and equatorial location. Many parts of Indonesia receive substantial sun exposure throughout the year, which can have adverse effects on the skin. The Meteorology, Climatology and Geophysics Agency (BMKG) provides warning

about importance use *sunscreen* with factor protection sun (*SPF*) minimum 30 (Putri, 2023). Wardah, as a local brand, offers various affordable and high-quality sunscreen products to protect the skin from the sun and pollution. However, data from the Top Brand survey indicates a decline in the brand index in the sunblock cream subcategory in 2022-2023.

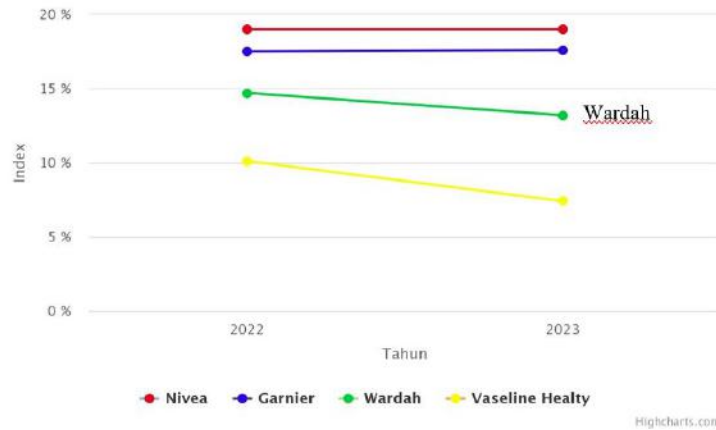


Figure 1. Top Brand Award Sunblock Cream Comparison 2022-2023

Source: Top Brand Award

The decline in the brand index for Wardah sunscreen indicates a decrease in mind share, commitment share, and future intention. Among the three parameters used to measure brand performance as a reference for Top Brand, one parameter is top-of-mind awareness. This parameter refers to brand awareness, as the most crucial aspect of brand awareness is the information retained in the mind in the first place (Kalimasada, 2019). Moreover, this brand awareness can influence purchase intention (Purwianti & Ricarto, 2018). Purchase intention is the consumer behavior when they express an interest in buying a product or service (Simamora, 2011). Several factors can influence purchase intention, including Electronic Word of Mouth (eWOM), one form of which is influencer reviews (Naziih et al., 2021). Supported by a survey conducted by Rakuten Insight in May 2023 on social media influencers, approximately 68 percent of Indonesian respondents stated that they purchase a product because it is endorsed by an influencer (Statista, 2023). With many brands using influencers for product marketing, a significant number of consumers believe that influencers promote products because they are paid to do so (Zak & Hasprova, 2020). Therefore, in addition to influencer reviews, customer reviews can also influence an individual's purchase interest. Customer reviews are based on the personal experiences of consumers who have completed transactions (Maharani & Widarmanti, 2022). According to research by Yaacob et al., (2021), customer reviews have a significant influence on purchase intention. Positive online reviews can enhance consumer trust in a product, thereby increasing the likelihood of them making a purchase (Hartini et al., 2022). Trust can also elevate consumers' positive attitudes toward transactions, ultimately boosting their purchase intentions (Dwidienawati et al., 2020). Therefore, this study aims to determine the influence of Wardah's marketing, whether through influencer endorsement or customer reviews, on the purchase intention of Wardah's sunscreen. The study includes the variable of trust as a moderating factor in this relationship.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Customer Review

Customer review is defined as an evaluation produced by peers regarding a product or service, covering aspects such as price, functionality, and user experience, which can be expressed in the form of text, images, or videos (Zheng, 2021). Furthermore, online customer reviews are also defined as part of word-of-mouth marketing, serving as an alternative to effective marketing media for companies to promote products or services at relatively low costs (Zhao et al., 2019).

### **Influencer Endorsement**

An influencer is a person or personality who holds sway over a considerable number of individuals, typically determined by the size of their social media following (Hariyanti & Wirapraja, 2018). A social media influencer is an individual who has successfully built a social network with a significant number of followers, where the follower count reflects their level of popularity (De Veirman et al., 2017). Influencer marketing is a marketing approach that concentrates on particular key individuals instead of the broader target market, as these individuals have been recognized as potential buyers (Dwidienawati et al., 2020).

### **Trust**

Trust is the consumer's belief in the person or entity providing reviews or customer support (Dwidienawati et al., 2020). Online trust is considered highly crucial in the context of online shopping, as previous research has found that trust is a primary cause of an individual's attitude and intention to make a purchase (Chetioui et al., 2021).

### **Purchase Intention**

In the purchase intention stage, consumers can make decisions by considering various factors such as brand, seller, quantity, timing, and available payment methods (Kotler et al., 2021). Purchase intention increases by approximately five percent more when a viral message is recommended by a friend through social media compared to when it comes directly from a company (Baack & Clow, 2018).

### **Hypothesis**

This research adopts a conceptual framework that refers to the framework of a previous study titled "Customer Review or Influencer Endorsement: Which One Influences Purchase Intention More?" by (Dwidienawati et al., 2020). The following is the conceptual framework that is based on the aforementioned previous research:

Online consumer reviews must be managed correctly and integrated into the marketing communication strategy of all businesses. This aligns with research conducted by Tran (2020), which validates the positive effect of online reviews on purchase intention. The more positive reviews from customers regarding a product, the more it will drive consumer purchasing interest (Maharani & Widarmanti, 2022).  
H1: Customer reviews have a positive impact on the purchase intention of Wardah sunscreen products.

Influencers have a large number of followers, enabling them to have broad reach and influence on likeability. Research by Yaacob et al., (2021) reveals that customers often make online purchases under the influence of an influencer. This is consistent with the study by Weismueller et al. (2020), which found that the number of followers has a positive impact on source attractiveness, source trust, and purchase intention.

H2: Influencer endorsement has a positive impact on the purchase intention of Wardah sunscreen products.

Online shoppers typically seek information before making purchasing decisions, as acquiring insights from the experiences of other consumers can mitigate risks and bolster trust in products and services (Dwidienawati et al., 2020). There is a relationship between the moderation variable trust, indicating that trust reduces the influence of product reviews on consumer purchase intention (Maharani & Widarmanti, 2022). Research conducted by Iskandar & Sharif (2022) also indicates that the ability of influencer endorsement to persuade customers and the honesty in providing product reviews can enhance trust in influencer endorsement.

H3: Trust moderates the relationship between customer reviews and the purchase intention of Wardah sunscreen products.

H4: Trust moderates the relationship between influencer endorsement and the purchase intention of Wardah sunscreen products.

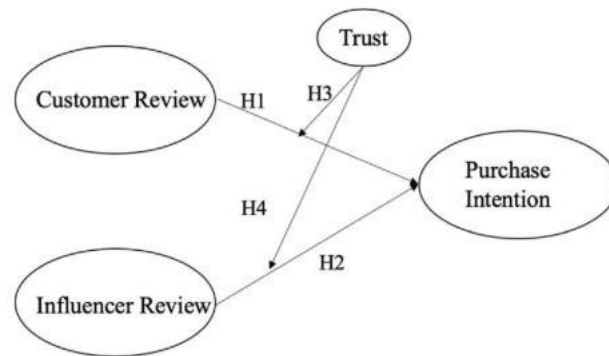


Figure 2. Research Framework

## METHOD

This research adopts a quantitative approach and has a causal nature, aiming to establish cause-and-effect relationships between independent and dependent variables. The population for this study comprises consumers who are aware of and interested in Wardah sunscreen products. The exact population size is unknown. The required sample size is at least five times the number of indicator variables (Ferdinand, 2014). In this study, there are 15 indicators, so the minimum required sample size is 15 x 5, which equals 75 samples, rounded up to 100. The research utilizes a non-probability sampling approach, specifically employing purposive sampling techniques. The gathered data undergoes analysis through Partial Least Squares (PLS) with the assistance of Smart-PLS. The analysis comprises two key stages. The initial stage focuses on the outer model, encompassing the assessment of the validity and reliability of each research indicator. Subsequently, the second stage involves the inner model, designed to elucidate the connections between latent variables.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The questionnaire designed for this study is targeted at consumers who are aware of and interested in purchasing Wardah sunscreen products. Consequently, the detailed respondent profiles are as follows:

Table 1. Respondent Profiles

	Variables	Frequency	Percent
<b>Gender</b>	Female	125	83%
	Male	25	17%
<b>Age</b>	17 – 25 years	89	60%
	26 – 35 years	54	36%
	36 – 45 years	5	3%
	>45 years	2	1%
<b>Profession</b>	Students	71	47%
	Government employees	15	10%
	BUMN employees	11	7%
	Businessman	6	4%
	Private employees	40	27%
	Others	7	5%
<b>Education</b>	SMA/Equivalent	75	50%
	Diploma	15	10%
	Bachelor	53	35%
	Masters	7	5%

The majority of respondents, when analyzed by gender, are females, comprising 83%. In terms of age, the majority falls within the 17-25 age range, accounting for 60%. Regarding the profession, the majority identifies as students, constituting 47%. Based on the highest level of education attained, the predominant category is high school education, representing 50%. The majority of respondents align with Wardah's target market as the brand offers products commonly used by women, and its affordable pricing is suitable for the student demographic within the 17-25 age group.

The analysis process consists of two stages: initially, the outer model is utilized for the evaluation of the validity and reliability of each research indicator. Following this, the second stage involves the inner model, which seeks to comprehend the connections among latent variables (Dwidienawati et al., 2020).

## 1. Outer Model

### a. Convergent Validity

Table 2. Measurement of Convergent Validity

Variables	No Item	Outer Loading	AVE	Remark
Customer Review	CR01	0.848	0.635	Valid
	CR02	0.775		
	CR03	0.728		
	CR04	0.830		
Influencer Endorsement	IE01	0.889	0.713	Valid
	IE02	0.821		
	IE03	0.848		
	IE04	0.818		
Trust	TR01	0.897	0.648	Valid
	TR02	0.854		
	TR03	0.772		
Purchase Intention	PI01	0.835	0.710	Valid
	PI02	0.741		
	PI03	0.818		
	PI04	0.822		

The parameters for convergent validity can be assessed by examining the outer loading of each indicator, where each indicator should have a value  $> 0.7$ , and the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) should be  $> 0.5$  (Abdillah & Hartono, 2015). In this study, all outer loading values for each item are  $> 0.7$ , and the AVE values  $> 0.5$ . This indicates that all statement items in this research can be considered to have convergent validity.

### b. Discriminant Validity

Table 3. Measurement of Discriminant Validity

Customer Review	Influencer Endorsement	Purchase Intention	Trust
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<b>Customer Review</b>	0.797			
<b>Influencer Endorsement</b>	0.316	0.844		
<b>Purchase Intention</b>	0.442	0.348	0.805	
<b>Trust</b>	0.391	0.283	0.465	0.843

Discriminant validity is evaluated through the application of Fornell and Larcker's criteria, which entail comparing the square root of Average Variance Extracted (AVE) with the correlations between latent variables (constructs) and other constructs within the model (Abdillah & Hartono, 2015). The results indicate that in this study, the square root of AVE for the variables Customer Review, Influencer Endorsement, Purchase Intention, and Trust has a higher value than the correlations with other variables.

#### c. Reliability

Table 4. Measurement of Reliability

Variables	Cronbachs Alpha	Composite Reliability	Remark
<b>Customer Review</b>	0.807	0.874	Reliabel
<b>Influencer Endorsement</b>	0.867	0.909	Reliabel
<b>Trust</b>	0.796	0.880	Reliabel
<b>Purchase Intention</b>	0.818	0.880	Reliabel

Reliability testing can be conducted using two methods: Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability (CR). The parameters for reliability testing involve ensuring that the values of Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability (CR) were greater than 0.6 (Ghozali & Latan, 2015). In this study, all variables demonstrate reliability

## 2. Inner Model

#### a. R Square

R-squared is examined to elucidate the degree to which independent variables impact the dependent variable (Ghozali & Kusumadewi, 2023).

Table 5. Measurement of R Square

Variable	R Square
<b>Purchase Intention</b>	0.371

Based on the measured R-squared value above, the R-squared for purchase intention is 0.371, indicating that the influence of the customer review and influencer endorsement variables collectively contributes to 37.1% of the variance in purchase intention. The remaining 62.9% is influenced by other variables.

#### b. F Square

F-square is used to determine the effect size of independent variables (Ghozali & Kusumadewi, 2023)

Table 6. Measurement of F Square

Variables	F Square
<b>Customer Review</b>	0.061
<b>Influencer Endorsement</b>	0.027

According to the presented table, the F-square test results reveal that the variables "customer review" and "influencer endorsement" exhibit F-square values below 0.15. This suggests that both of these independent variables exert a limited influence on purchase intention.

### 3. Hypothesis Testing

The hypotheses in this study are directional (one-tailed) with a significance level of 0.05 or 5%. If the T-statistic has a value  $> 1.64$  and the P-value is  $< 0.05$ , then the hypothesis results can be accepted (Indrawati, 2015).

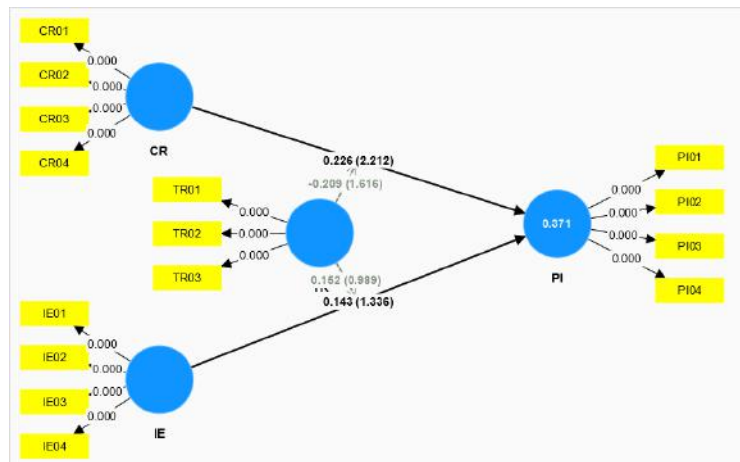


Figure 3. Structural Model (Bootstrapping)

Table 7. Measurement of Hypothesis Testing

Relationship	T- Stat	P Value	Conclusion
Customer Review-> Purchase Intention	2.212	0.027	H1 Accepted
Influencer Endorsement-> Purchase Intention	1.336	0.182	H2 Rejected
Moderating Effect 1 (Customer Review*Trust) -> Purchase Intention	1.616	0.106	H3 Rejected
Moderating Effect 2 (Influencer Review*Trust) -> Purchase Intention	0.989	0.323	H4 Rejected

### Discussion

The findings from the research affirm the acceptance of Hypothesis 1 (H1), signifying that customer reviews indeed have a substantial and positive effect on the purchase intention for Wardah sunscreen products. This is supported by the study conducted by Yaacob et al. (2021), which demonstrates that customer reviews have a significant influence on online purchase intention. This is also in line with the research by Maharani & Widarmanti (2022), stating that there is a relationship between customer reviews and purchase intention, implying that more positive reviews related to a product will stimulate consumer buying interest.

Influencer endorsement in this study does not have an influence on purchase intention, as indicated by the rejected H2. This discovery is consistent with the study conducted by Maharani & Widarmanti (2022), which establishes that influencer reviews lack a significant and positive influence on purchase intention. Most consumers believe that influencers promote products because they are being paid to do so (Zak & Hasprova, 2020).

Further testing was conducted on the influence of trust to see if it directly affects purchase intention. From the hypothesis testing, both in Influencer Endorsement and Customer Review, Trust has no moderating effect but has a direct influence. This is consistent with the research of Dwidienawati et al. (2020), which shows that the moderating effect of trust on the relationship between influencer support and buying intention is not supported. This study did not succeed in showcasing the moderating impact of trust on customer reviews and influencer endorsements concerning purchase intention. Furthermore, the research did not provide evidence supporting the idea that heightened trust in reviews corresponds to an increased level of purchase intention.

## CONCLUSION

The research discussion, conducted through SEM-PLS analysis using Smart-PLS software, yields conclusive findings. It is evident that customer reviews exert a positively significant influence on the purchase intention of Wardah sunscreen products. On the contrary, influencer endorsement does not exhibit a significant positive impact on the purchase intention of Wardah sunscreen products. Additionally, trust, whether in Influencer Endorsement or Customer Review, is found to have a direct influence but does not moderate the effects. Based on the conclusions and research results explained earlier, Wardah as a company can be more selective in choosing influencers with credibility and strong influence among the target market relevant to Wardah sunscreen. The company can also strengthen interactions with customers to encourage more positive reviews. Increasing customer engagement through social media platforms or the company's website can be an effective way to stimulate positive reviews.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The authors are grateful to Telkom University, especially The Directorate of Research and Community Service and The Dean of Faculty of Economics and Business for their support and encouragement, which has facilitated the completion of this research. The author hopes that the outcomes of this study will be advantageous to Faculty of Economics and Business, Telkom University.

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