

## **Influence of Beauty Micro-Influencer Towards Indonesian Purchase Intention of Skincare Products**

**Agustinus Krishna Pratama Gracia Adi<sup>1</sup>, Annisa Rahmani Qastharin<sup>2</sup>**

Institut Teknologi Bandung, Indonesia<sup>1,2</sup>

Email: agustinus\_krishna@sbm-itb.ac.id

**Keywords:**

Attractiveness, Expertise, Micro-Influencer, Purchase Intention, Skincare, Trustworthy.

**Abstract:** The Indonesian skincare industry has seen robust growth, with revenue reaching \$2.06 billion in 2023 and projected to continue rising. This surge is accompanied by increased market competition, marked by a significant influx of new brands. Consumers face challenges in brand selection, often influenced by social media beauty influencers. This thesis explores the role of micro-influencers in shaping consumer purchase intentions, focusing on their credibility and its impact on brand attitude and purchase behavior. This study the concerning the effectiveness of micro-influencers and sets forth research questions and objectives to evaluate the influence of micro-influencer credibility on brand attitude and purchase intention. The theoretical foundations review relevant literature on influencer marketing, particularly the classification and characteristics of influencers. It delves into the concept of purchase intention and the Ohanian model of credibility, which includes attractiveness, trustworthiness, and expertise. This framework establishes the understanding how micro-influencers affect consumer attitudes and behaviors. The methodology outlines the quantitative approach and survey methodology used to collect data from 160 active skincare users in Indonesia. It details the measurement of variables, such as influencer credibility, brand attitude, and purchase intention, and describes the data analysis techniques using SEM-PLS which is employed to test the hypotheses. Data analysis reveals significant correlations between micro-influencer credibility attributes and brand attitude. Attributes such as expertise, trustworthiness, and attractiveness enhance consumer perception of skincare brands. The analysis confirms that a positive brand attitude mediates the relationship between influencer credibility and purchase intention, highlighting the strategic value of credible micro-influencers in marketing. The thesis concludes that micro-influencers play a crucial role in influencing consumer purchase intentions through their impact on brand attitude. Practical recommendations for skincare brands on leveraging micro-influencer partnerships to enhance market reach and consumer trust and for micro-influencer to focus on enhancing expertiseness and trustworthiness among audience. For future research should explore micro-influencers' impact in different cultures, product categories, long-term brand loyalty, and the effects of post frequency, content type, follower engagement, and emerging social media platforms.

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## **INTRODUCTION**

the significant role of fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) in daily life, emphasizing their high inventory turnover, low cost, and high sales volume (Kaiser, 2011; Joghee & Kumar, 2013). Personal care items, a subset of FMCG, are defined as goods used for health, cleaning, and beauty purposes, including skincare products (Montes-Grajales et al., 2017). Skincare products are specifically designed to maintain skin hygiene (National Library of Medicine, 1994). The skincare industry in Indonesia has seen stable and significant growth in revenue since 2018, with projections showing continued growth (Statista Market Insights, 2024). The industry's expansion has led to increased competition, as evidenced by the growing number of players in the market from 2021 to 2023 (Coordinating Ministry for Economic Affairs, 2024). This competitive environment, driven by changing market trends and social media influence, has made it challenging for consumers to choose skincare brands (Nawiyah et al., 2023).

The influence of social media beauty influencers, particularly on platforms like TikTok and Instagram, has become a critical factor in consumer decision-making. Preliminary research involving interviews with skincare users revealed that influencers play a significant role in shaping purchase intentions, with most interviewees trusting influencers over traditional celebrities (Appel et al., 2019; Jin & Ryu, 2020). Influencers' credibility, which includes attractiveness, trustworthiness, and expertise, significantly impacts consumers' brand attitudes and purchase intentions (Chekima et al., 2020; Lou & Yuan, 2019; Ki & Kim, 2019; Chen et al., 2021). The research also highlights the differentiation between types of influencers, such as Nano, Micro, Macro, and Mega influencers, based on their follower count (Campbell & Farrell, 2020). Furthermore, researcher conducted a preliminary research through interview with 7 active skincare user and found out that micro-influencer has no influence of purchase intention on the skincare products that are being endorsed.

In the Indonesian context, while many skincare brands utilize micro-influencers, the preliminary research suggests that macro and mega influencers, who have a broader reach, are more trusted and influential than micro-influencers (Cond & Casais, 2023; Janssen,et.al., 2022).. However, existing research on the impact of micro-influencers is limited and not specific to the Indonesian skincare industry. However, researches from Kay, et.al. (2020) and Vionasafira & Sjabadhyni (2018) stated that micro-influencers positively increase purchase intention since they are considered to have better approach than macro and mega influencer that gives good impression towards the brand that is being promoted and reviewed. This gap highlights the need for further study on the effectiveness of micro-influencers performance using the Ohanian model within the Indonesian skincare market.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Beauty Influencer**

An influencer is someone who has earned the trust of a large social media following, which grants them significant reach and impact (Wamba & Carter, 2014). Influencer marketing involves third parties influencing others' purchase intentions (Brown & Hayes, 2007). Influencers build their online presence by gaining expertise and knowledge, regularly creating content, and engaging a large audience (Vaidya & Karnawat, 2023). Influencers are categorized into Nano (less than 10,000 followers), Micro (10,000 to 100,000), Macro (100,000 to 1 million), and Mega (over 1 million) influencers (Campbell & Farrell, 2020). The number of followers depends on the influencer's field and the persona and content they create, which helps them acquire followers

and exert influence (Ki & Kim, 2019). The popularity of influencers has led businesses to collaborate with them to endorse or promote products, giving rise to influencer marketing (Lou & Yuan, 2019). The influence of beauty influencers on purchase intention is evaluated through four factors: influencer characteristics (expertise, attractiveness, credibility), content characteristics, brand-influencer congruence, and consumer-influencer congruence (Feng et al., 2023). These characteristics align with Ohanian's (1990) model, which measures an endorser's effectiveness in terms of attractiveness, expertise, and trustworthiness.

## **Purchase Intention**

Based on Ajzen's (1991) theory of planned behavior, intention is how hard someone is willing to try and the effort they exert to perform a behavior. Purchase intention is a planned behavior where someone is willing and trying to buy a product or service. It is the strongest predictor of actual purchasing behavior (Sheeran et al., 2005). Research shows that purchase intention grows over time, eventually leading to a purchase action, demonstrating the "recency" effect (Chintagunta & Lee, 2012).

## **Credibility**

Credibility is a communicator's ability to deliver a positive influence, affecting the audience's acceptance of the message (Ohanian, 1990). Ohanian (1990) created a model to consistently measure credibility, consisting of three dimensions: attractiveness, trustworthiness, and expertise.

### **a. Attractiveness**

Attractiveness as a source of credibility is defined as how appealing an endorser's physical appearance is to the target audience (Ohanian, 1990). Research shows that physical attractiveness influences opinions and product evaluations (Joseph, 1982; Petzer, 1983). McGuire's (1985) "source valence" divides attractiveness into four indicators: familiarity, similarity, attractiveness, and likability. Familiarity refers to the audience's knowledge of the endorser, similarity is the perceived affinity between the endorser and the audience, and likability refers to how much the audience likes the endorser's appearance and behavior (Erdogan, 1999).

### **b. Trustworthiness**

Trustworthiness is the level of confidence in an endorser's intent to communicate valid claims and opinions (Hovland, Janis, & Kelly, 1953). Trustworthiness includes honesty, dependability, reliability, and ethical behavior. Ohanian (1990) refined these into five variables: honest, trustworthy, dependable, reliable, and sincere.

### **c. Expertise**

Expertise as a credibility source is defined as the extent to which an audience perceives an endorser as a valid source of assertions (Hovland, Janis, & Kelley, 1953). Ohanian (1990) categorizes expertise into five dimensions: expert, experienced, knowledgeable, qualified, and skilled.

## **Brand Attitude**

Brand attitude is the overall evaluation or reaction of consumers towards a brand (Wilkie, 1986, as cited in Keller, 1993). It can be either positive or negative, influenced by the consumer's knowledge of the brand (Hawkins et al., 2007). Keller (1993) identifies brand attitude as a crucial factor in shaping consumer behavior when choosing a brand. Wu and Wang (2011) outline three dimensions of brand attitude: cognitive (knowledge or brand trust), affective (emotional response or brand affection), and conative (action or purchase intention). This research focuses on cognitive

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and affective dimensions, represented by brand trust and brand affection, due to overlapping dimensions in other studies. These dimensions shape consumer interest in purchasing a brand.

**Hypothesis Development:**

- 1. Attractiveness and Brand Attitude:** Research by Wang & Scheinbaum (2018) in the airline industry, Putri & Roostika (2022) in advertisement strategy, and Till & Busler (2000) on energy snacks found that attractiveness of influencers significantly influences brand attitude.
  - **H1:** The attractiveness of Micro-Influencers significantly influences the brand attitude of skincare product brands.
- 2. Trustworthiness and Brand Attitude:** Studies by Putri & Roostika (2022) and Wang & Scheinbaum (2018) found that influencer and celebrity trustworthiness significantly impacts brand attitude.
  - **H2:** The trustworthiness of Micro-Influencers significantly influences the brand attitude of skincare product brands.
- 3. Expertise and Brand Attitude:** Lim et al. (2017) found that influencer expertise had no significant impact on consumer attitude towards brands, whereas Putri & Roostika (2022) found a significant influence in the Indonesian context.
  - **H3:** The expertise of Micro-Influencers significantly influences the brand attitude of skincare product brands.
- 4. Brand Attitude and Purchase Intention:** Research by Lim et al. (2017), Mackenzie & Spreng (1992), and Putri & Roostika (2022) demonstrated a significant relationship between brand attitude and purchase intention, indicating that brand attitude shapes consumer interest in purchasing a brand.
  - **H4:** Brand attitude significantly influences the purchase intention of skincare product brands.

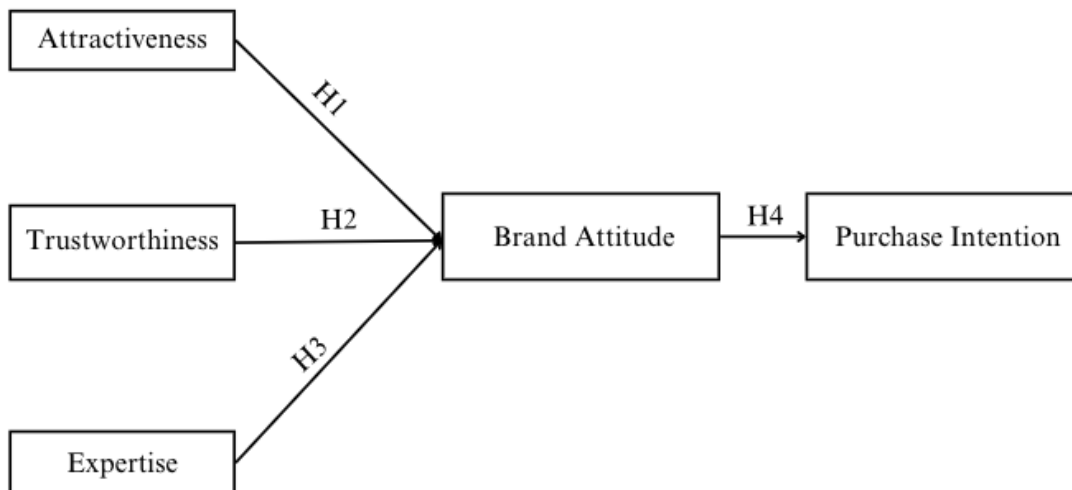


Figure 1 : Conceptual Framework  
Adapted from Putri & Roostika (2022).

## **METHOD**

### **Research Approach**

Creswell & Creswell (2018) suggest using a quantitative approach when the research aims to understand the relationship between variables. Since this study examines the relationship between independent and dependent variables, a quantitative approach is deemed suitable.

### **Research Method**

Given the quantitative approach, this study employs a quantitative research method, including data collection, analysis, and interpretation. Data will be collected through an online questionnaire distributed via Google Forms, and the analysis will be conducted using partial least squares (PLS-SEM) (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

### **Data Collection:**

#### a. Primary Data

According to Malhotra et al. (2017), primary data is original data collected specifically to address the research problem. It is raw data that provides unconverted information about the study object (Cerar et al., 2021). This research collects primary data through an online questionnaire using a Likert scale (Emerson, 2017).

#### b. Secondary Data

Secondary data refers to data collected by other researchers for purposes other than the current research problem (Malhotra et al., 2017). In this study, secondary data is sourced from journals, papers, and surveys.

### **Population and Sample**

Sample size is the subset of the population needed to ensure data sufficiency for drawing conclusions (Sekaran & Bougie, 2010). This study uses non-probability sampling with a purposive sampling technique (Elfil & Negida, 2017; Berndt, 2020). Based on the 5:1 ratio for questionnaire indicators, a minimum of 105 respondents is required (Hair et al., 2019). The respondents must have watched skincare brand endorsements or reviews by micro-influencers and fall within the age range of 12-44 years, aligning with the beauty product users identified by ZAP Clinic & Markplus Inc. (2020) and Chan et al. (2023).

### **Data Analysis**

This research uses PLS-SEM (Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling) to analyze the relationships between variables. SEM helps understand how different variables and concepts relate within a single model (Malhotra et al., 2017). PLS-SEM, which focuses on predicting models, is suitable for small sample sizes and complex models, as it is used in this study to analyze the relationships between independent variables, a mediatory variable, and a dependent variable (Hair et al., 2019; Hair et al., 2021).

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The Respondents gathered are around 170 who are active skincare user, Indonesian, Gen Z and Millenials, and ever exposed to endorse and review of product brand skincare from Beauty Micro-influencer

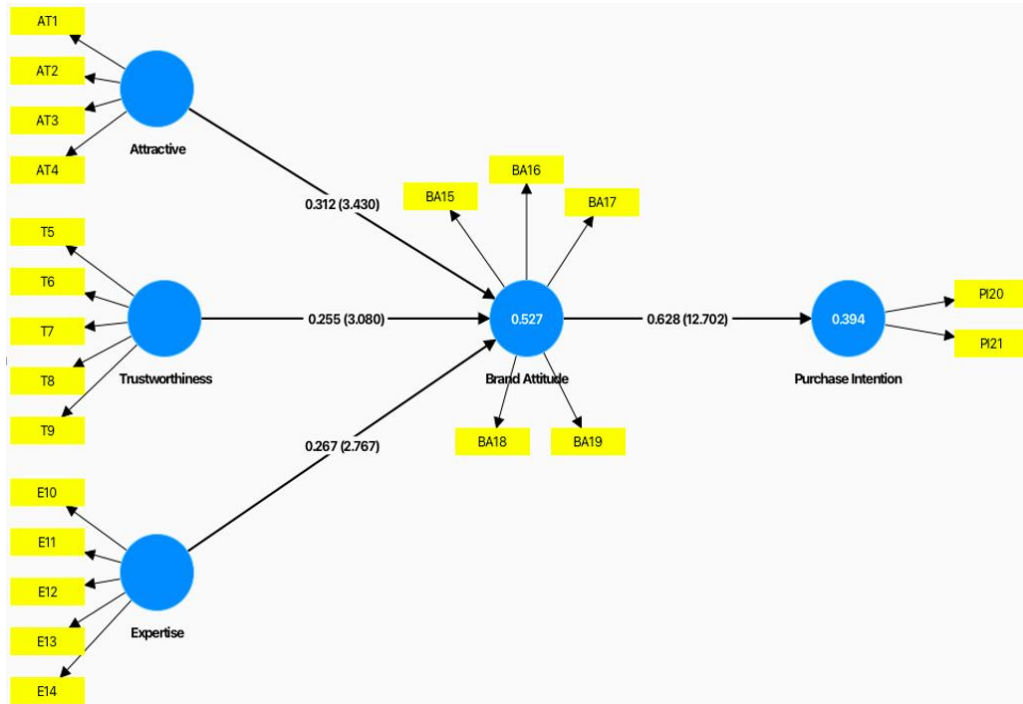


Figure 2 : PLS SEM-result

### Internal Consistency Reliability

According to the Hair et.al., (2014) the internal consistency reliability test is to measure the reliability of the model construct in a study. A variable can be considered as reliable if the Cronbach alpha is larger than 0.6 and the composite reliability (rho\_c) should be bigger than 0.7 (Wong, 2013; Malhotra, et.al. 2017).

Table 1 : Internal Consistency Reliability

	<b>Cronbach's alpha</b>	<b>Composite reliability (rho_c)</b>	<b>Reliability</b>
<b>Attractive</b>	0.677	0.804	Reliable
<b>Brand Attitude</b>	0.799	0.861	Reliable
<b>Expertise</b>	0.853	0.895	Reliable
<b>Purchase Intention</b>	0.675	0.859	Reliable
<b>Trustworthiness</b>	0.86	0.9	Reliable

### Convergent Validity Test

The convergent validity test is a measure of the variable positively correlated with other variables in the same model (Malotra, et.al., 2017). The measures for convergent validity test required several conditions. The first condition is the average variance extracted should be bigger than 0.5 or else the variable will be considered as invalid.

Table 2 : Convergent Validity Test

<b>Variable</b>	<b>AVE</b>	<b>Validity</b>
Attractive	0.508	Valid
Brand Attitude	0.555	Valid

Expertise	0.633	Valid
Purchase Intention	0.753	Valid
Trustworthiness	0.644	Valid

**Discriminant Validity Test**

The discriminant validity is to measure the whether the variables are distinkted to each other so all of the variables are able to contributed uniquely (Malhotra, et.al., 2017). According to the Wong (2013) the measure of the discriminant validity test is using the square root of AVE of each latent variable. The value of AVE square root should be bigger than the correlation value between latent variables.

	Attractive	Brand Attitude	Expertise	Purchase Intention	Trustworthiness
Attractive	<b>0.713</b>				
Brand Attitude	0.647	<b>0.745</b>			
Expertise	0.706	0.646	<b>0.795</b>		
Purchase Intention	0.543	0.627	0.65	<b>0.868</b>	
Trustworthiness	0.571	0.6	0.621	0.545	<b>0.802</b>

Table 3 : Discriminant Validity Test

**Collinearity Test**

Collinearity Test is a test to measure whether the exogenous latent variables in the model has any collinearity issue so the variable that has potential of collinearity issue can be terminated. The measurement in collinearity issue check is using variance inflation factor (VIF) value with rule of thumb whereas the VIF value of each exogenous latent variable should be 5 and below (Hair, et.al, 2011).

Table 4 : Collinearity Test

Indicators	VIF
AT1	1.263
AT2	1.237
AT3	1.58
AT4	1.431
BA15	1.461
BA16	1.682
BA17	2.138
BA18	2.062

BA19	1.729
E10	1.582
E11	2.671
E12	2.458
E13	1.779
E14	1.803
PI20	1.351
PI21	1.351
T5	1.42
T6	1.734
T7	2.835
T8	2.415
T9	2.168

### Structural Path Significance

The study's results indicate that 52.7% of the variance in brand attitude is explained by the independent variables: Attractiveness, Expertise, and Trustworthiness. Similarly, 39.4% of the variance in purchase intention is explained by brand attitude. When examining the  $Q^2$  values, the study reveals that the influence of Attractiveness, Expertise, and Trustworthiness on brand attitude can be considered a strong and accurate prediction. This is evidenced by the  $Q^2$  value exceeding 0.35. Additionally, the influence of brand attitude on purchase intention also demonstrates strong predictive accuracy. To further evaluate the overall model fit, the Goodness of Fit (GoF) was calculated. The GoF is determined by first averaging the  $Q^2$  values, then averaging and square-rooting the  $R^2$  values, and finally multiplying the square-rooted  $R^2$  by the averaged  $Q^2$ . The study's GoF result exceeds 0.1 and is found to be 0.3, indicating an acceptable fit for the model.

Table 7 : Structural Path Significant

	<b>Path Coefficient</b>	<b>T statistics</b>	<b><math>Q^2</math></b>	<b><math>R^2</math></b>
<b>Attractive -&gt; Brand Attitude</b>	0.312	3.43	0.489	0.527
<b>Expertise -&gt; Brand Attitude</b>	0.267	2.767		
<b>Trustworthiness -&gt; Brand Attitude</b>	0.255	3.08		
<b>Brand Attitude -&gt; Purchase Intention</b>	0.628	12.702	0.385	0.394



**F-Square Test**

Cohen’s F Square effect size is a method to measure the relationship among exogenous and endogenous latent variables. There are several threshold to measure the relationship between variables using square effect size in this study. If the number of F square is less than 0.02 it will be considered as no impact (Hair, et.al., 2019), if the number is more than 0.02, it will be considered as weak, if the number is more than 0.15 it will be considered as medium, and if its more than 0.35 it can be considered as strong (Wong, 2013).

Table 6 : F-Square Test

	<b>F Square</b>	<b>Result</b>
<b>Attractive -&gt; Brand Attitude</b>	0.097	Small
<b>Expertise -&gt; Brand Attitude</b>	0.065	Small
<b>Trustworthiness -&gt; Brand Attitude</b>	0.08	Small
<b>Brand Attitude -&gt; Purchase Intention</b>	0.651	Strong

**Hypothesis Testing**

In hypothesis testing, the researcher will use the Bootstrapping method that is calculated using SmartPLS computing to figure out the T-value and P-value. According to Wong (2013), the T value should be bigger than 1.96 so the exogenous variable can positively influence the endogenous variable or independent variable. While for the P value itself should be lower than 0.05 so it can be considered to have positive influence.

Table 7 : Hypothesis Testing

	<b>T statistics</b>	<b>P values</b>	<b>Result</b>
<b>Attractive -&gt; Brand Attitude</b>	3.43	0.001	Accepted
<b>Expertise -&gt; Brand Attitude</b>	2.767	0.006	Accepted
<b>Trustworthiness -&gt; Brand Attitude</b>	3.08	0.002	Accepted
<b>Brand Attitude -&gt; Purchase Intention</b>	12.702	0	Accepted

**Mediating Result**

Observing the data shown in table 13, it can be concluded that all the independent variables positively influence the dependent variables since all the P-values & T-statistics are below 0.05 and beyond 1.96 respectively. Furthermore, attractiveness of positively influence purchase intention through mediatory of brand attitude by 19.6%, expertise positively influence purchase intention through mediatory of brand attitude by 16.8%, and trustworthiness positively influence purchase intention through mediatory of brand attitude by 16%.

Table 8 : Mediating Result

Variable	Path Coefficient	T statistic	P value
Attractive -> Purchase Intention	0.196	3.316	0.001
Expertise -> Purchase Intention	0.168	2.574	0.010
Trustworthiness -> Purchase Intention	0.160	2.988	0.003

**Discussion**

The study tested four hypotheses concerning the impact of micro-influencers' attractiveness, trustworthiness, and expertise on brand attitude and how this brand attitude subsequently influences purchase intention in the skincare industry. The results of the hypotheses testing are summarized as follows:

**1. H1: Attractiveness of Micro-Influencer Positively Influences Brand Attitude**

The first hypothesis was accepted. The analysis revealed that micro-influencer attractiveness positively influences the brand attitude of skincare product brands, with a T-value of 3.43 and a P-value of 0.001, both of which surpass the thresholds required for hypothesis acceptance. This finding is supported by previous research from Kemeç & Yüksel (2021) and Putri & Roostika (2022), who also found that attractiveness positively influences brand attitude. However, Lim et al. (2017) found no such influence, potentially due to differences in focus, as their study did not concentrate on micro-influencers. In this study, attractiveness is the most influential factor among the independent variables in shaping a positive brand attitude, particularly for Gen Z and Millennials in Indonesia.

**2. H2: Trustworthiness of Micro-Influencer Positively Influences Brand Attitude**

The second hypothesis was also accepted. The analysis showed that trustworthiness positively influences brand attitude, with a T-value of 3.08 and a P-value of 0.002. These results are consistent with findings from Wang & Scheinbaum (2018) and Putri & Roostika (2022). However, Lim et al. (2017) found no influence of trustworthiness on brand attitude, which may be due to differences in research location and object of study.

**3. H3: Expertise of Micro-Influencer Positively Influences Brand Attitude**

The third hypothesis was accepted, indicating that micro-influencers' expertise positively influences brand attitude, with a T-value of 2.767 and a P-value of 0.006. This finding aligns with research from Kemeç & Yüksel (2021) and Putri & Roostika (2022). Again, Lim et al. (2017) found no such influence, likely due to differing research focuses and contexts.

**H4: Brand Attitude Positively Influences Purchase Intention**

The final hypothesis was accepted, demonstrating that brand attitude positively influences purchase intention, with a T-value of 12.702 and a P-value of 0.000. This finding is supported by research from Mackenzie & Spreng (1992) and Putri & Roostika (2022), showing that a positive brand attitude significantly boosts consumers' purchase intentions.

**CONCLUSION**

The research investigated how micro-influencers' source credibility, which includes attractiveness, trustworthiness, and expertise, influences brand attitude and how this brand attitude subsequently affects purchase intention for skincare brands. The study utilized descriptive analysis and PLS-SEM analysis, focusing on data collected within Indonesia. The findings reveal that micro-influencers' credibility, especially in terms of attractiveness, plays a

significant role in shaping a positive brand attitude. This positive attitude, marked by brand trust and emotional connection, is crucial for skincare brands in building strong consumer relationships. Moreover, the research demonstrated that a positive brand attitude significantly enhances purchase intention, indicating that consumers who trust and feel positively towards a brand are more likely to purchase its products. Among the factors studied, attractiveness emerged as the most influential in forming a positive brand attitude, driven largely by physical appeal and friendliness.

The study contributes to the theoretical understanding of influencer marketing by confirming the importance of attractiveness in the Indonesian skincare market, aligning with existing theories on social media influence and consumer behavior. Practically, the research underscores the need for skincare brands to select micro-influencers who are not only attractive but also trustworthy and knowledgeable, as these factors significantly impact brand attitude and purchase intention. For future research, it is recommended to explore the effects of micro-influencers across different cultural contexts and product categories, as well as to study the long-term impacts on brand loyalty and customer retention. Investigating other moderating variables, such as post frequency and engagement levels, could also provide a more comprehensive understanding of influencer marketing dynamics. Additionally, examining the role of emerging social media platforms, particularly among Gen Z, could yield valuable insights.

For micro-influencers, the study suggests focusing on building credibility by enhancing attractiveness, trustworthiness, and expertise. Authentic engagement with followers and providing well-informed reviews are crucial for maintaining and growing influence. Collaborating with brands that align with their values and continuously improving product knowledge is also recommended. For skincare businesses, it is important to partner with influencers who are perceived as attractive, trustworthy, and knowledgeable. Companies should invest in training their influencer partners to enhance their expertise and ensure effective communication about products. Monitoring and optimizing influencer campaigns, particularly on platforms like TikTok, is essential for targeting the right audience and maximizing impact. This comprehensive approach emphasizes the critical role of micro-influencers in shaping consumer behavior, particularly in the Indonesian skincare industry.

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