






“The importance of social media influencers in increasing an intention to buy local sneakers in Indonesia through engagement”

AUTHORS	Ani Solihat  Arief Helmi  Yudi Azis  Rita Komaladewi 
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Rita Komaladewi, 2025

Ani Solihat, Doctoral Student,
Faculty of Economics and Business,
Department of Management,
Padjadjaran University, Indonesia.

Arief Helmi, Dr., Prof. S.E., M.P.
Lecturer, Faculty of Economics and
Business, Department of Management,
Padjadjaran University, Indonesia.

Yudi Azis, S.E., S.Si., S.Sos., M.T., Ph.D.
Prof., Lecturer, Faculty of Economics
and Business, Department of
Management, Padjadjaran University,
Indonesia.

Rita Komaladewi., Dr. S.P., MM,
Lecturer, Faculty of Economics and
Business, Department of Management,
Padjadjaran University, Indonesia.



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Ani Solihat (Indonesia), Arief Helmi (Indonesia), Yudi Azis (Indonesia),
Rita Komaladewi (Indonesia)

THE IMPORTANCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCERS IN INCREASING AN INTENTION TO BUY LOCAL SNEAKERS IN INDONESIA THROUGH ENGAGEMENT

Abstract

The intention to purchase local Indonesian sneakers remains relatively low, indicating a gap between the growing production of local footwear and consumers' actual willingness to buy. This study aims to analyze and empirically prove the role of social media influencers in increasing consumer purchase intention to buy local Indonesian sneakers, with engagement as a key variable that mediates the relationships. The research method used was a quantitative approach by distributing questionnaires to 360 respondents who were active users of social media and followed influencers in the field of sneakers from April to November 2024. The unit of analysis in this study consists of the social audience of local sneaker consumers in Indonesia. Using Structural Equation Modeling with a Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) approach, the results show that influencers exert a direct positive effect of 0.297 on purchase intention and 0.757 on engagement. Engagement, in turn, has a direct positive effect of 0.569 on purchase intention. These results also demonstrate an indirect positive effect of influencers on purchase intention through engagement, with a mediation effect of 0.43. Influencers have a high influence on engagement, so it is expected that local sneaker manufacturers in Indonesia must create content that not only increases purchase intention, but also has high engagement to their audience, because it can increase the intention to buy local sneakers in Indonesia.

Keywords

social media influencer, social media engagement,
purchase intention

JEL Classification

M30, M31, M37

INTRODUCTION

Local sneakers in Indonesia still have low purchase intention, because they are less popular. To increase popularity in the era of digital transformation, it is a good idea to use social media as a promotional medium. Currently, social media have given birth to a promotional modality for new products (Bertola et al., 2018). Companies are increasingly adopting digital communication to market their products and brands, utilizing social media and influencers as strategic tools (Sokolova & Kefi, 2022).

Although previous studies demonstrate that influencers can enhance consumers' intention to purchase local products through social media engagement, their findings have not fully explained how this mechanism operates in the context of Indonesia's local sneaker market. Therefore, this study specifically examines the role of influencers and engagement in shaping purchase intention within this industry. The fit between influencers and the products they promote is assumed to enhance perceived credibility, which in turn can motivate consumers

to engage with and ultimately purchase local products (Oteh et al., 2023). Ao et al. (2023) assert that the characteristics of social media influencers, especially their perceived trustworthiness, are significantly associated with customer engagement and purchase intention. Social media influencers surpass traditional celebrities in endorsements because they communicate and interact more effectively with customers through frequent sharing of personal content and the development of reciprocal relationships (Djafarova & Rushworth, 2017). Organizations employ influencers not merely as service facilitators but as strategic resources that contribute to sustained value creation and strengthen global brand presence (Aljuboori et al., 2022). Currently, brands are increasingly leveraging social media influencers to promote and endorse their products (Audrezet et al., 2020). Previous studies indicate that social media influencers can significantly influence consumer behavior by enhancing both engagement and purchase intention. Research has demonstrated a moderate to strong relationship between consumer engagement with influencers and their subsequent purchase behavior (Ao et al., 2023; Leong et al., 2024). Social media influencers play a critical role in shaping the purchasing intentions of their audience (Ta et al., 2025). Consumer engagement potentially mediates the correlation between the attributes of influencers and their followers' purchase intentions (Sutiono et al., 2024). However, another study suggests that social media influencers do not have a significant direct effect on purchase intention among Lazada users in Sukabumi, Indonesia (Hanifah et al., 2024). This study is in line with research of Hermanda et al. (2019). This suggests that social media influencers may not directly enhance the purchase intention of local cosmetic consumers. Interestingly, some researchers argue that this reflects a potential contradiction in the relationship between influencer attributes and consumer purchase intentions. For example, research indicates that social media influencers have limited impact on major purchasing decisions regarding Emina products in Semarang City, whereas brand attitude demonstrates a significant and positive influence on consumer behavior (Markiones et al., 2023). In the Malaysian men's skincare market, purchase intention is affected by factors such as influencer recognition, perceived likability, and attractiveness (Leong et al., 2024), in the case of waste bag products, client interaction appears to have no significant direct impact on purchase intention (Sutiono et al., 2024).

Consumers' perceptions of the motives underlying influencer endorsements influence purchase intention via engagement, yet a weak influencer effect can reduce this impact (Shan et al., 2019). These findings reveal that influencer effectiveness relies heavily on context and audience perception. Without robust supporting cues, influencers alone cannot drive purchase intention, making moderating variables crucial for converting engagement into actual consumer interest.

Leveraging influencers has presented new opportunities or threats for local sneaker manufacturers to interact with customers in marketing their products. Some local celebrities promote sneakers and other footwear on social media. The desire to increase local sneaker purchase intent by leveraging local sneaker influencers leads to the following problem: understanding how social media influencers can create engagement and influence purchase intention. This study aims to analyze and empirically prove the role of social media influencers in increasing consumer purchase intention to buy local Indonesian sneakers, with engagement as a key variable that mediates relationships.

1. LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES

According to Hudders et al. (2021), a social media influencer is an individual with a following on social media who can disseminate messages that affect others. Recently, influencer marketing on social media has surged in popularity, with numerous companies collaborating with influenc-

ers to promote their products, as influencers act as intermediaries in product promotion through their creative advertising (Hudders et al., 2021). Currently, brands increasingly use social media influencers to promote their products (Audrezet et al., 2020). It shows how social media influencers can relate to their own image. Also known as celebrity endorser, ambassadors or spokespersons, they are more commonly used by charitable orga-

nizations and non-profit organizations. By having certain abilities at the moment, they are respected and supported by their followers. However, having a large audience is not enough to ensure that the message will be successfully conveyed (Vrontis et al., 2021). Lynn-Sze and Fathi (2023) say that good content from social media influencers can attract others to convey and receive messages well. For example, from a reliable experience, having a quality reach and a good relationship with followers may not be the right rep to support a particular campaign and what an influencer needs to convey to his or her social media followers. It is important for brands and organizations to focus not only on the number of social media influencers, but also on the quality of the content, the credibility of the experience, and the appropriateness of their relationship with the audience, to ensure effective and successful campaign message delivery.

Given that the effectiveness of a campaign depends heavily on the credibility and quality of the content that the influencer delivers, it is important to first understand the essence of the influencer himself, who is essentially an individual with the ability to influence others and has a substantial following on social media (Ponirah, 2020). Influencers have become essential to branding strategies, with more than 86% of marketers integrating influencer marketing into their approaches in 2018, and this trend is anticipated to persist (Vrontis et al., 2021). Influencers promoting local products rely on their ability to establish trust, relevance, and resonance with their intended audience (Ao et al., 2023; Adrian, 2023). The significance of trust and the caliber of participation of social media influencers in actively swaying consumers' purchasing decisions regarding various goods is evident. Research indicates a significant correlation between consumer confidence, appealing quality, and purchase objectives (Gurung et al., 2023; Dalangin et al., 2021). The effectiveness of influencers in driving product sales relies on their ability to establish trust, relevance, and resonance with their intended audience (Lakmal et al., 2019). A theoretical model is proposed wherein influencer trustworthiness and expertise affect purchase intention (Tran et al., 2025). The role of influencers in modern branding strategies has become crucial, with most marketers integrating influencer marketing in their approaches,

a trend that is expected to continue. Influencers' success in driving product sales and influencing consumer purchase intent relies heavily on their ability to build trustworthiness, relevance, and resonance with their intended audience, backed by compelling expertise and quality.

Therefore, looking at the significant correlation between influencer trust and purchase intent, it can be concluded that influencers not only serve as a tactical marketing tool, but also rather provide a crucial function in building relevance and reliability, which ultimately positions influencer promotion as an essential element of the brand's ongoing strategy for client acquisition and retention. Influencers provide a crucial function in establishing relevance and reliability. This divergence positions influencer promotion as an essential element of a brand's enduring strategy for client acquisition and retention (Okonkwo & Namkoisse, 2023; Ao et al., 2023). Influencer excitement incentives predominantly pertain to involvement, and their validity is more deliberate than other characteristics (Ao et al., 2023). The influencer serves as a persuasive entity in intentional purchasing (Leong et al., 2024). Furthermore, the engagement component may alter the association between influencer characteristics and intentional purchasing (Sutiono et al., 2024). Influencer promotion is a key element in a brand's strategy for client acquisition and retention. The success of this promotion is strongly driven by influencer engagement, which serves as the main persuasive entity, and its validity is more deliberate than other characteristics, and can even moderate the relationship between influencer characteristics and purchase intent.

The content presented by influencers on social media becomes the main bridge that translates their engagement and persuasive power into a significant increase in client buying interest, strengthening the overall effectiveness of influencer promotions. Zaidi (2024) asserts that the regular dissemination of fresh content can enhance user followership and online reputation, hence facilitating the emergence of influencers capable of exerting considerable influence in their domains. Influencers exert a considerable influence on purchase intention across numerous studies and circumstances. Influencer endorsement positively influences consumer purchase intentions for a product or

service (Mathea & Laksmidewi, 2024). Some research provides conflicting results concerning the particular characteristics of influencers that influence purchase intention. Some research points out the role of trust and information quality in influencing purchase intention (Al-Mu'ani et al., 2023). Dalangin et al. (2021) have explored the impact of influencers on purchase intentions (Saad et al., 2025). Regular dissemination of content is key to increasing users' reputation and followers, which ultimately leads to influencers who have significant influence. In general, influencer endorsements positively influence consumer purchase intention. However, there are conflicting results regarding specific characteristics (such as trust and quality of information) that have the most impact on purchase intention.

The role of influencers in digital marketing in addition to serving as a credible source that directly influences consumers' purchase intention through recommendation and endorsement mechanisms, the presence and dissemination of their content on an ongoing basis significantly increases the audience's social media engagement (such as likes, comments, and shares). Influencers creatively include certain items in their content to foster engagement among their followers through interactions such as "likes" and "comments", representing ideal performance by influencers (Wies et al., 2023). According to Jaitly and Gautam's (2021) research, influencers have a significant impact on consumer attitudes and perceptions because they are more adept at speaking with specific market segments. According to Ao et al. (2023), influencers open up a new avenue for agencies to compete with one another for client involvement. Social media can influence buyer behavior (Coursaris et al., 2016; Gelbrich et al., 2023). According to Coursaris et al. (2016), social media involvement is a crucial element that contributes to more favorable results than negative ones. Influencers on social media can boost engagement and trust among prospective customers (Dessart, 2017; Vrontis et al., 2021; Manggopa et al., 2023). Influencers serve as a highly effective catalyst for marketing communications due to their ability to creatively and strategically drive high social media engagement (through likes and comments), which is driven by their proficiency in targeting and shaping the attitudes and per-

ceptions of specific market segments, and ultimately creating more profitable outcomes.

Based on the premise that social media engagement (including interactions, likes, and shares) significantly reflects the trust and quality of the audience's relationship with the content presented, the next step is to test and elaborate the extent to which the intensity and nature of such engagement correlate and directly influence consumer purchase intent. The impact of social media activity on purchase intentions is significant. Engagement on social media generates potent online marketing (Bilgihan & Ricci, 2024). Social media engagement serves as a favorable indicator for assessing likes, views, and postings. Negative metrics are generated when social media content is considered unsuitable or unfavorable (Sabri et al., 2023). Content disseminated on social media generates either positive engagement or not; if it is favorable, the content elicits a positive response (Wu et al., 2024). Engagement can manifest in interactions with several entities: communities, customers, and brands (Dessart, 2017; Vrontis et al., 2021). Robust social media involvement, elevated trust, and heightened client purchase intention (Manggopa et al., 2023). Prentice et al. (2019) elucidate the findings of research regarding the correlation between engagement and purchasing intention inside online communities. Involvement encompasses attitudes and acts. Both identifications substantially influence engagement, potentially resulting in purchase intention. The findings of a study indicate that engagement is favorably associated with purchase intention. This engagement aims to attract new clients and maintain existing loyal ones (Sheshadri et al., 2022). Overall, social media engagement activities, including interactions with communities, customers, and brands, are factors that mediate increased consumer trust, which is a key foundation that drives the transition from positive responses to content to higher purchase intent.

This study aims to analyze and empirically prove the role of social media influencers in increasing consumer purchase intention to buy local Indonesian sneakers, with engagement as a key variable that mediates the relationship (see Figure 1). In this study, the following hypotheses are proposed based on insights from the literature:

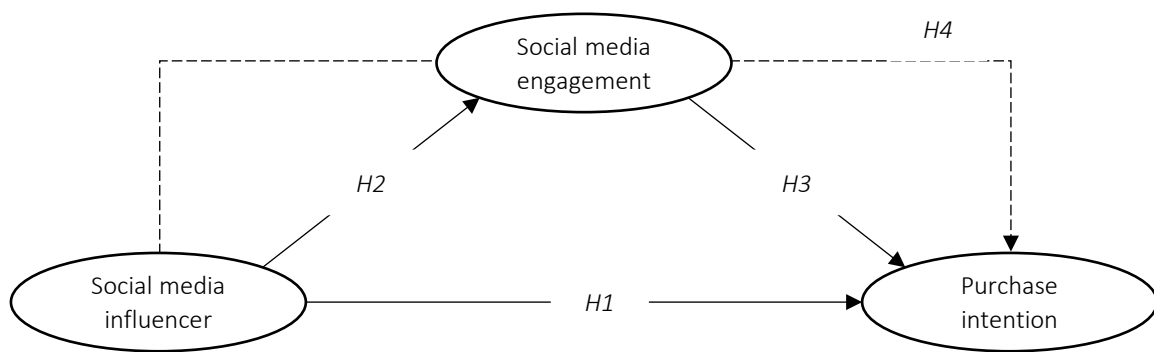


Figure 1. Conceptual model

- H1: Social media influencers exert a direct impact on enhancing consumer purchase intention.*
- H2: Social media influencers directly affect social media engagement.*
- H3: Involvement directly influences purchase intention.*
- H4: Social media engagement mediates the relationship between social media influencers and purchase intention.*

findings. This study employs Partial Least Squares (PLS) measurement for data grouping analysis to evaluate the hypothesis.

Certain methodologies involve data acquisition using online social networking platforms (Alfantoukh & Durrezi, 2014) and electronic data gathering via a laptop computer (Pace & Staton, 2005). This study employed data collection techniques by disseminating questionnaires via Google Forms to social media followers of the most favored local sneakers in Indonesia, as well as to netizens who expressed an affinity for local Indonesian sneakers. The questionnaires consisted of a structured list of questions aligned with the indicators specified in the operational variables.

2. METHODOLOGY

The research method used was a quantitative approach by distributing questionnaires to 360 respondents who were active users of social media and following influencers in the field of sneakers from April to November 2024. This study focuses on the social media audience of local sneaker consumers in Indonesia as its primary unit of analysis. In this study, the researchers employed purposive sampling, as defined by Sekaran and Bougie (2016) as a “technique to identify samples based on specific criteria.” The sample size of 360 also exceeds the general SEM recommendation of ≥ 200 respondents (Kline, 2011). This study ensures adequate statistical power and higher model validity. Thus, the use of 360 respondents is considered sufficient to support the reliability and robustness of the research

2.1. Respondent characteristics

The results of the distribution of the questionnaire consisting of 360 respondents were obtained, and the characteristics of the respondents are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Respondents’ data

Description	Total	Percent
Gender		
Male	201	56%
Female	159	44%
Age		
1946-1964 (Gen Boomers)	23	6%
1965-1980 (Gen X)	25	7%
1981-1996 (Gen Y)	103	29%
1997-2012 (Gen Z)	209	58%
Occupation		
Employee	132	37%
University student	126	35%
High school student	38	10%
Entrepreneur	4	1%
Other	60	17%

Table 1 indicates a higher number of male respondents compared to female respondents in this study. Regarding birth year, Gen Z respondents constitute the majority at 58%, followed by Gen Y at 29%, with Gen X and Baby Boomers representing nearly equal shares of 7% and 6%, respectively. The most common occupation among respondents is employees, followed by university students, other professions, entrepreneurs, and high school student.

3. RESULTS

3.1. Validity and reliability tests

A validity test is a condition that characterizes the instrument's quality in question, capable of measuring

what will be tested. Every indicator item has a high cross-loading value in relation to the indicator on other variables, Table 1 that displays cross-loading results. As a result, the test's results are deemed valid in a biased way.

The validity and reliability findings are presented in Tables 2 and 3.

Based on the data in Tables 2 and 3, outer loading is more than 0.7, with an explanation of purchase intention of 0.767, social media engagement of 0.732, and social media influencer of 0.784; then the three variables have met the criteria of convergent validity. Composite reliability and Cronbach's Alpha. If the composite reliability value is more than 0.7 and the Cronbach's Alpha value is more than 0.7, it meets reliability, while all scores are above 0.9.

Table 2. Validity test

Indicator	Purchase intention	Social media engagement	Social media influencer
Social media influencer			
Expertise professional	0.593	0.587	0.870
Expertise knowledge	0.569	0.576	0.865
Trustworthiness	0.647	0.65	0.867
Credibility	0.56	0.612	0.865
Entertainment value	0.611	0.689	0.870
Informative value	0.655	0.714	0.931
Attractiveness product information	0.694	0.74	0.937
Attractiveness appearance	0.708	0.694	0.872
Reach	0.726	0.73	0.888
Social media engagement			
Consumption content	0.776	0.807	0.736
Like	0.714	0.870	0.762
Comment	0.607	0.872	0.533
Share	0.609	0.867	0.546
Recommend	0.642	0.861	0.595
Purchase intention			
Want to know the product	0.850	0.742	0.654
Interested in finding information	0.917	0.753	0.674
Considering buying	0.810	0.525	0.601
Interested in trying	0.904	0.726	0.622
Want to buy products	0.895	0.699	0.634

Table 3. Reliability test

Indicator	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite reliability (rho_a)	Composite reliability (rho_c)	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Purchase intention	0.924	0.930	0.943	0.767
Social media engagement	0.909	0.915	0.932	0.732
Social media influencer	0.966	0.968	0.970	0.784

3.2. Collinearity statistic test

The multicollinearity test employs the VIF (Variance Inflation Factor) value and the collinearity statistic test. This multicollinearity test was to determine whether the independent variables in the regression model were correlated. The presence of a perfect linear relationship between some or all of the variables that account for the regression model is known as multicollinearity. Finding out if a regression model reveals a strong or perfect correlation between independent variables is the goal of the multicollinearity test. The Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) value and tolerance value can be used to determine this test. The Variance Inflation Factor, or VIF, value was examined in order to conduct the test. If VIF (Variance Inflation Factor) is the centered value. If the VIF value < 10 or the tolerance value > 0.01, then it is stated that multicollinearity does not occur, and if the VIF value > 10 or the tolerance value < 0.01, then multicollinearity is stated.

Table 4. Collinearity test

	Saturated model	Estimated model
SRMR	0.081	0.081
d_ULS	1.258	1.258
d_G	1.081	1.081
Chi-square	1097.999	1097.999
NFI	0.767	0.767

Based on the collinearity test, an NFI value was obtained, and the value was obtained with an NFI value of 76.7%. If this value > 10 or the tolerance value < 0.01, then multicollinearity is declared.

3.3. R-square (R²)

The next step in this investigation is to investigate and determine the amount of endogenous construct there is, namely purchase intention; intermediary variables (mediads), namely social media engagement, and exogenous variables are social media influencers. Variables can be present or can be explained by exogenous variables from the test results that have been tested. This is done at the R-square or R² test stage. The closer R-square is to the value of 1, the better the model. Normally, if R-square > 0.5, the model is declared good.

Table 5. Results of R-square (R²)

Indicator	R-square
Purchase intention	0.668
Social media engagement	0.572

Based on Table 5, R-square purchase intention value is 0.668. This means $0.668 \times 100 = 66.8\%$ and $100\% - 66.8\% = 33.2\%$. These results show that social media influencers with a value of 66.8% influence the purchase intention variable, and there are 33.2% of other variables are not discussed. The R-square social media engagement value of 0.572 means $0.572 \times 100 = 57.2\%$ and $100\% - 57.2\% = 42.8\%$. These results show that social media influencers influence the social media engagement variable by 57.2% and there are 42.8% influenced by other variables that are not discussed.

Table 6. Results of Q-square

Indicator	Q-square
Purchase intention	0.664
Social media engagement	0.570

The outcomes of the predictive relevance test stated that the Q-square test value contained in the purchase intention variable was 0.664 and the Q-square test value in the social media engagement variable was 0.5705 which means that model can be said to be relevant it has a Q-square value greater than zero (>0). The F-square is presented in Table 7.

Table 7. F-square test results

Indicator	Purchase intention	Engagement	Influencer
Purchase intention			
Engagement	0.416		
Influencer	0.114	1.339	

The results from Table 7 are as follows:

- a) social media influencers variable has a large impact on the engagement variable because it has a value of 0.416;
- b) influencer social media variable have a large impact purchase intention which the F² value of 0.114;
- c) influencer variable have a large impact on the engagement variable of 1.339. A hypothesis test carried out using the bootstrapping method; here is the output image of the bootstrapping test results.

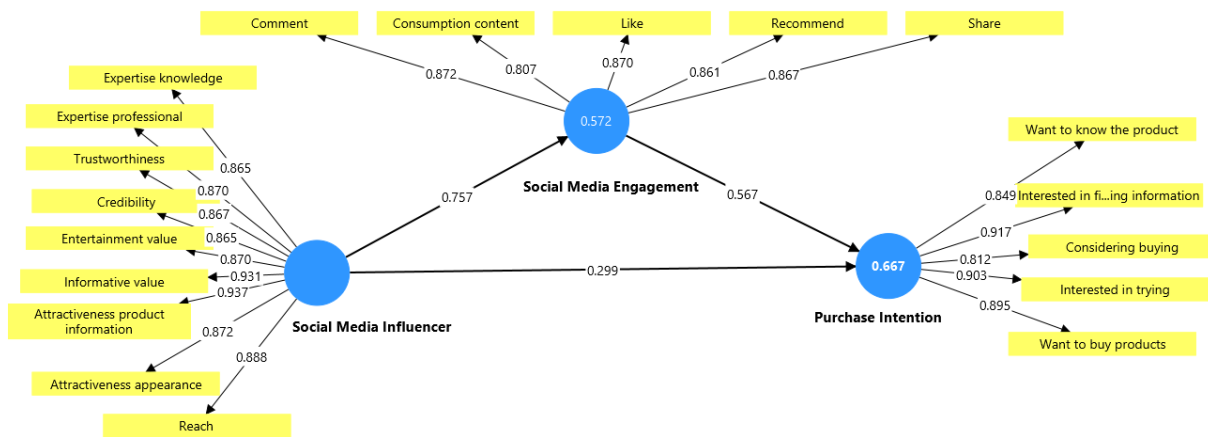


Figure 2. Structural model

The t-statistic must be greater than the table value of 1.65 with a confidence level (α) of 0.05 or a p-value < 0.05 .

The results of the path coefficient test are as follows:

4. Influencers have a direct positive influence of 0.297 on purchase intention. The t-statistic value of 3.251 > 1.65 and the p-value of 0.000 < 0.05 indicate that the influence is significant. This means that statistically $H1$ is accepted.
5. Influencers have a direct positive influence of 0.757 on engagement. The t-statistic value is 21.049 > 1.65 , and the p-value of 0.001 < 0.05 indicates that the influence is significant. This means that statistically $H2$ is accepted.
6. Engagement has a direct positive influence of 0.569 on purchase intention. The t-statistic value of 7.026 > 1.65 and the p-value of 0.000 < 0.05 indicate that the influence is significant. Statistically, $H3$ is accepted.
7. Engagement mediates the indirect influence of influencers on purchase intention by 0.43. With a t-statistic value of 7.956 > 1.96 and a p-value of 0.000 < 0.05 , engagement mediates

the influence of influencers on purchase intention, meaning that statistically $H4$ is accepted.

4. DISCUSSION

Social media influencers are people appointed by manufacturers to be asked to help promote their products, in this case local sneaker products in Indonesia, this certainly provides a goal to increase purchase intention for its followers with a wider audience. Based on the results of the study, it shows a positive but low score. This is quite attractive to the attention of the audience who are not followers of the official account of local sneaker products in Indonesia and can increase purchase intention for the audience who see the content. This is the expertise possessed by influencers in presenting local sneaker content, so that it can create purchase intention for local sneakers. This effective promotion can influence the audience with the credibility of an influencer. This is in accordance with research by Zaidi (2024), which shows a contribution to the formation of social media influencers that can have a significant impact. Influencer attributes to create more efficient influencer marketing tactics and positively affect consumers' attitudes towards the advertised brand and their tendency to buy the

Table 8. Test results hypotheses

Path	Original sample (O)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	t-statistics (O/STDEV)	p-values
Influencer → Purchase intention	0.299	0.091	3.251	0.001
Influencer → Engagement	0.757	0.036	21.049	0
Engagement → Purchase intention	0.567	0.081	7.026	0
Influencer → Engagement → Purchase intention	0.430	0.054	7.956	0

promoted product (Al-Mu'ani et al., 2023). Social media influencers have a significant impact on purchase intent across a variety of studies and contexts. Research has consistently shown that influencer endorsements positively influence consumers' intention to purchase a product or service (Mathea & Laksmidewi, 2024). Studies show that influencers can significantly raise the likelihood that consumers will purchase products or services. This is in accordance with research conducted by Mathea and Laksmidewi (2024) indicating that influencers can improve audience identification and purchase intention through entertaining presentations, good planning, and authentic experiences. This is in line with Zaidi's (2024) research, which states, "contributing to the formation of social media influencers who can have a significant impact on their respective fields." In other words, influencer attributes are used to create more efficient and effective influencer marketing tactics that can positively affect consumer attitudes toward advertised brands and their likelihood of purchasing promoted products.

Social media influencers have a very high value influence on social media engagement. This is because Influencers have credibility and are considered trustworthy figures by the audience. When influencers recommend a particular product, their followers are more likely to be interested in interacting with that content. Social media influencers have a level of consistency with the content they post, with a positive image, this certainly creates and impresses that the influencer has more abilities and skills, thus creating a trust in the audience. This is in accordance with research conducted by Kareem and Venugopal (2023) saying that "influencer credibility is indeed an important factor that affects the perception and behavior of their followers. Several studies show that influencer credibility consisting of trust, expertise, and attractiveness has a positive effect. Usually influencers have an audience that suits their respective target markets, in this case social media followers of influencers mostly have the same level of hobbies, namely liking local sneakers; thus, the content presented is relevant to the audience thus making their followers more emotionally and interactively. This is in accordance with a statement from Shoukat et al. (2023) conveying that influencer credibility can increase the emotional attachment and influence assumed by followers.

Influencers also have content creativity that creates interesting content, so that reviews of products, lifestyles, or fashion trends, which make the audience inspired to comment, share, or like the content, even many audiences have FOMO (Fear of Missing Out) traits so as to create a sense of urgency or interest for the audience not to miss the trend, thereby increasing interaction on social media. The content presented by influencers has the characteristics of authentic content and storytelling about their experience using local sneaker products so that it is able to influence the emotions of the audience and encourage them to interact. As a result of the content presented by influencers on social media, of course, it results in an engagement in their audience so that the audience tends to respond positively to content involving influencers, which leads to an increase in the number of likes, comments, and shares, this shows that influencers have given the impression that the product has quality and value in local sneakers so that it affects the audience's view.

The role of social media influencers is very important in shaping consumer perceptions and behaviors, including in the fashion and lifestyle industry, one of which is the sneaker market, especially local brands that aim to build brands. A social media influencer is someone whose content on social media can influence others. The style of influencers in presenting products has their own expertise so that they can influence the audience. When viewed from the various content presented by these influencers, they are passionate about explaining products to be able to influence the audience by using a combination of delivery styles. The involvement component can intervene in the relationship between influencer property and purchase intention in expansion (Maryanto et al., 2024). According to some research, influencers' credibility, which includes their trustworthiness, knowledge, and good looks has a favorable impact. Influencers usually have a following that is similar to their target market. The majority of the influencer's social media followers in this instance have comparable interests, including a love for local footwear. Because the information is relevant to the audience, their followers become more emotionally and interactively engaged with it. According to Shoukat et al. (2023), "Influencer credibility can increase emotional attachment and

the influence assumed by followers.” This is consistent with their findings. Because of the material that influencers post on social media, audiences are inherently engaged and react favorably to content that features influencers. As a result, there are more likes, comments, and shares, suggesting that influencers have influenced audience perception by giving the idea that the local sneakers are high-quality and reasonably priced. Increased social media engagement boosts consumer confidence in product quality by fostering a favorable view of local shoes. Audiences are more likely to believe the opinions of friends or influencers they connect with (digital word-of-mouth), and audience comments, reviews, or reposts might serve as an indirect endorsement. Active reactions from the local sneaker audience, like messages, comments, or feedback, establish an emotional bond with the audience and increase their propensity to buy (Dabbous & Barakat, 2020).

The model built based on the relationship between variable social media engagement and purchase intention has positive and high values. If you look at the value, this number is quite high affecting purchase intention, thus local sneaker manufacturers must compete to create engagement in the audience so that they can increase purchase intention. Social media engagement such as watching and giving reactions likes, comments, shares and recommendations makes local Indonesian sneaker content more often seen in posts on feeds or stories. This increases brand awareness and is the first step in the purchase intention journey. Engagement on social media has a positive impact on the level of trust and purchase intention among customers (Matin et al., 2020). The higher the interaction on social media creates a positive perception of local sneakers, thereby increasing consumer confidence in product quality. Comments, reviews, or reposts from the audience can be an indirect form of recommendation and of course, the audience tends to trust the opinions of friends or influencers who interact with digital word-of-mouth. There is an activity carried out by local sneakers in their content doing campaigns on Instagram or TikTok that generate high engagement so that they can increase visibility of the product, they also respond quickly to comments or direct messages, this shows that they care about customers, which increases buying interest. Thus, local sneakers in Indonesia have understood

and utilized social media engagement strategically so that they can increase purchase intention in local and global markets.

The effect of influencers is very high in increasing the intention to buy local sneakers in Indonesia, with the power of influencers even without involving engagement being able to increase the purchase intention of local sneakers. This shows that the strength of credibility from local sneaker influencers has a very high power of trust, in the hearts of followers and social media audiences of local sneaker lovers. The content created by local sneaker product influencers already has trust and proximity to the audience so that it encourages active engagement such as likes, comments, and shares, and even they have discussions to build trust and strengthen positive perceptions of the product, which ultimately increases purchase intention. Local sneaker influencers today have high credibility so that they can create the perception that the products they recommend have a certain quality or value and this effect shows real enthusiasm or interest from the audience to have a desire to buy. This is in accordance with research conducted by Ao et al. (2023) that influencers are mainly associated with engagement, and their credibility affects purchase intent more than other attributes. The role of engagement can mediate the relationship between influencer attributes and purchase intention (Sutiono et al., 2024)

Given the variation in findings on the extent to which engagement components can intervene in the relationship between influencer property and purchase intent in various contexts and products, further research needs to focus on how social media engagement is directly influenced by Indonesian influencers, and several research results show people who can sway audiences on social media are known as social media influencers. Because of their extremely high credibility, their audience trusts these influencers, and they inevitably have an effect on audience engagement. Consequently, research findings indicate that the model developed based on the connection between social media engagement and influencers has good value. This advantage is due to the fact that influencers are regarded as reliable individuals by their followers. Influencers who endorse particular products increase the likelihood that their followers will want to engage with that

content. The majority of social media influencers provide content on a regular basis, and when they project a favorable image, their audience is more likely to trust them because they believe they are more capable. According to Shaply's (2023) research, "Influencer credibility is indeed an important factor influencing their followers' perceptions and behavior."

Given that influencer credibility effectively increases emotional attachment and encourages strong social media engagement activities that lead to positive perceptions of product quality and price, it is essential to test the transition from such a perceptual response to a more concrete behavior, namely the impact of social media activity on purchase intention of local Indonesian sneaker products. We developed a model based on the positive correlation between purchase intention and social media participation. To boost purchase intention, local sneaker producers must compete to engage their audience. Likes, comments, and shares on social media increase the frequency with which local sneaker content shows up in audience feeds or stories. This raises awareness, which is the first step in the journey towards purchasing intention.

The impact of Indonesia influencers on purchase intention is mediated by social media engagement, and this has a greater value in raising purchase intention mediated by social media engagement than the direct influence of social media influencers on buy intention. This suggests that influencers have a very high impact on consumers' intentions to buy local shoes in Indonesia and that their power increases engagement, which in turn increases

consumers' intentions to buy local sneakers in Indonesia. The data suggests that the followers of local sneaker influencers on Instagram have a very high degree of trust in their authenticity. The audience already trusts and connects with the content produced by local influencers for sneaker products, which encourages active participation through likes, comments, and shares. In order to foster trust and reinforce favorable opinions about the product, they even have conversations, which eventually increases the desire to buy. Due to their current high level of reputation, local sneaker influencers can provide the impression that the products they endorse are valuable or possess particular attributes. This effect shows that the audience is genuinely interested or enthusiastic, which makes them want to buy. According to research by Ao et al (2023), "influencers are primarily associated with engagement, and their credibility has a greater impact on purchase intention than other attributes." This is consistent with their findings. Engagement has a crucial moderating role in the link between purchase intention and influencer qualities (Sutiono et al., 2024). Leveraging social media influencers to drive increased engagement of potential customers, the most pressing questions regarding these results have been answered. Social media interactions seem to have a significant impact on social media influencers, and of course, as social media engagement gets involved in the first place, more people will buy local sneakers. Research generally reveals that social media influencers significantly influence consumer purchases, especially for local shoe brands. Purchase expectations can be heavily influenced by influencer endorsements and engagement. (Maryanto et al., 2024; Weismueller et al., 2020).

CONCLUSION

This study aims to analyze and empirically prove the role of social media influencers in increasing consumer purchase intent for local Indonesian sneakers, with engagement as a key variable that mediates relationships. This study shows that a professional influencer has an attractive appearance, good knowledge and information about the product, has skills in conveying product messages, thus creating a trust in the audience so that it can influence the audience by providing engagement such as enjoying watching content, giving like, comment, and share reactions and even giving a recommending reaction. This is a stronger emotional bond created by the audience so that it tends to increase the purchase intention of local shoes in Indonesia. Further findings of interesting and good content are the main points in increasing engagement and purchase intention. Meanwhile, the content enjoyed by the audience has the highest influence compared to the reaction of giving likes, comments, shares, and recommends in increasing the purchase intention of local Indonesian sneakers.

This research is different from previous research by focusing on local sneaker products as a research object, in contrast to research that examines variables with different objects. As a result, this study advances our understanding of how audiences react on social media when viewing content and provides the benefits of the reactions that social media audiences make to content presented by influencers, and how much they react to content to create purchase intent. In conclusion, this study provides valuable insights on increasing purchase intention in local sneakers by presenting factors that influence influencers who provide engagement on social media content. Despite its limitations, these findings underscore the importance of increasing social media engagement to increase the purchase intention of local sneakers in Indonesia, so that the content presented should not only be from the post only, but also give more attention, so that the audience listens to the content with pleasure. This research in the future is recommended by comparing the content presented by influencers with affiliates, which of these variables can create engagement and purchase intention.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Conceptualization: Arief Helmi, Rita Komaladewi.

Data curation: Ani Solihat.

Formal analysis: Ani Solihat, Yudi Azis, Rita Komaladewi.

Funding acquisition: Ani Solihat, Arief Helmi, Yudi Azis, Rita Komaladewi.

Investigation: Arief Helmi, Yudi Azis, Rita Komaladewi.

Methodology: Ani Solihat.

Project administration: Ani Solihat.

Resources: Ani Solihat, Arief Helmi, Yudi Azis, Rita Komaladewi.

Software: Arief Helmi.

Supervision: Arief Helmi, Yudi Azis, Rita Komaladewi.

Validation: Ani Solihat, Arief Helmi, Yudi Azis, Rita Komaladewi.

Visualization: Ani Solihat.

Writing – review & editing: Ani Solihat, Arief Helmi, Yudi Azis, Rita Komaladewi.

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APPENDIX A

Table A1. Questionnaire

No.	Particulars	Question
		Filtering questions
		Do you like seeing social media related to local sneaker products? Yes/No
		Respondents' data
		Gender
		Age
		Occupation
7-point Likert scale questions (1= strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree)		
Social media influencer		
1	Expertise professional	Local sneaker product influencers have professional expertise in reviewing local sneaker shoes
2	Expertise knowledge	Local sneaker product influencers have high product knowledge
3	Trustworthiness	Local sneaker product influencers on social media have increased your trust in local sneakers
4	Credibility	Local sneaker product influencers have the ability to influence using local sneakers
5	Entertainment value	Local sneaker product influencers are able to provide entertainment
6	Informative value	Local sneaker product influencers are able to provide clear information about local sneakers
7	Attractiveness product information	Local sneaker product influencers have an attraction in conveying local sneaker information
8	Attractiveness appearance	Local sneaker product influencers have the appeal of their appearance
9	Reach	Local sneaker product influencers have great content in promoting local sneaker shoes
Social media engagement		
1	Consumption content	I enjoy local sneaker content on social media
2	Like	I don't hesitate to give a like button when I see local sneaker content on social media
3	Comment	I don't hesitate to comment when I see local sneaker content on social media
4	Share	I tend to re-share the content of local sneakers that appear on social media
5	Recommend	After I re-shared the content of local sneakers, I also recommended the product
Purchase intention		
1	Want to know the product	I like to look for information related to local sneaker content on social media
2	Interested in finding information	I am always interested in looking for more complete information (content) about local sneaker products on social media.
3	Considering buying	I am considering buying local sneaker products
4	Interested in trying	I am interested in trying local sneakers products
5	Want to buy products	I am interested in buying local sneakers