THE EFFECT OF CONTENT CREATOR ENDORSEMENTS ON MSME CONSUMERS' PURCHASING DECISIONS

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Abstract :

In the digital era, marketing strategies have shifted from conventional media to more dynamic and interactive social media. One of the strategies that is growing rapidly is the use of endorsements by content creators to influence consumer purchase decisions. This study aims to find out the extent of the influence of content creator endorsements on purchase decisions on MSME products. This study used a quantitative approach with multiple linear regression method and involved 75 respondents, which were determined based on the Malhotra formula (at least five times the number of indicators). The results showed that endorsements had a positive and significant influence on purchase decisions, with a significance value of 0.000 and a regression coefficient of 0.705. These findings indicate that collaboration with content creators can be an effective and efficient promotional strategy for MSMEs in reaching a wider market through social media.

Keywords : *Endorsement, Content Creator, Purchasing Decision, MSME, Social Media*

Abstrak :

Di era digital, strategi pemasaran mengalami pergeseran dari media konvensional menuju media sosial yang lebih dinamis dan interaktif. Salah satu strategi yang berkembang pesat adalah penggunaan endorsement oleh konten kreator untuk memengaruhi keputusan pembelian konsumen. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui sejauh mana pengaruh endorsement konten kreator terhadap keputusan pembelian pada produk UMKM. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif dengan metode regresi linear berganda dan melibatkan 75 responden, yang ditentukan berdasarkan rumus Malhotra (minimal lima kali jumlah indikator). Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa endorsement memiliki pengaruh positif dan signifikan terhadap keputusan pembelian, dengan nilai signifikansi sebesar 0,000 dan koefisien regresi sebesar 0,705. Temuan ini mengindikasikan bahwa kolaborasi dengan konten kreator dapat menjadi strategi promosi yang efektif dan efisien bagi UMKM dalam menjangkau pasar yang lebih luas melalui media sosial.

Kata Kunci: *Endorsement, Konten Kreator, Keputusan Pembelian, UMKM, Media Sosial*

INTRODUCTION

In the increasingly advanced digital era, marketing strategies are no longer limited to conventional media such as television, radio, and print. The development of information technology, especially social media, has changed the way business actors interact with consumers (Salsabila & Fitria, 2023). Platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, YouTube, and Facebook are now the main spaces for brand

promotion and communication. In the midst of this change, content creators or also known as influencers have become a central figure in the world of digital marketing. They are present as a third party that is able to bridge the gap between products and consumers through a more personalized and attractive approach (Trampubolon & Rorong, 2024). Endorsements made by content creators are considered more effective because they are persuasive and feel more natural than formal advertising. This makes the endorsement strategy through content creators a growing trend, especially in reaching the younger generation who are very active on social media (Kawilarang et al., 2022).

Content creators not only have a large number of followers, but they also have a strong influence in shaping audience opinions and behavior. They build close relationships with their followers through consistent interaction, relevant content, and authentic imagery (Duwila et al., 2022). This is what makes product recommendations from a content creator often considered more reliable than direct promotions from the company. On the other hand, business actors also see endorsements as an effective way to increase brand awareness, build brand image, and encourage consumer purchase decisions. In this context, the endorsement strategy by content creators is very relevant for micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) that have limitations in terms of budget and access to promotions (Kawilarang et al., 2022). With relatively more affordable costs and measurable results, many MSMEs are starting to adopt this strategy as part of their digital transformation to compete in an increasingly competitive market.

Endorsements by content creators are considered effective because of the element of trust and closeness between the content creator and his followers. Content creators are often considered as figures who are "close" to consumers' daily lives, so that they are able to create strong emotional connections (Puspita & Handayani, 2024). This relationship then forms the loyalty and trust of the audience for every message or recommendation conveyed by the creator. Consumers tend to receive product recommendations from someone they consider relevant and authentic compared to messages that come directly from a brand or company. In fact, in some cases, content creators have greater influence than traditional celebrities because they are considered more honest and less "commercial." Factors such as credibility (how trusted the creator is), personal appeal (appearance and communication style), and suitability between the creator's content and the product being promoted (brand-fit) are the main determinants in the success of the endorsement. If these factors are met, it is likely that consumers will be interested and encouraged to make a purchase (Afandi et al., 2021).

Various previous studies have examined the influence of endorsements on consumer behavior from various perspectives. Several studies show that endorsements can increase the perception of product quality, build trust in brands, and speed up purchase decisions. Such as research conducted by (Aulia Nurjannah et al., 2023) which found that endorsements carried out by influencers, content creators, and so on are able to increase consumer purchasing decisions. However, the results of the study are not always consistent as the results of the research conducted by (Afandi et al., 2021). Differences in results are generally due to differences in industry contexts—for example, between fashion, food, or technology

products—that have different audience characteristics. In addition, demographic factors such as age, gender, social background, and culture also affect the effectiveness of endorsements. The social media platforms used also have an impact, considering that each platform has a different audience and algorithm. For example, a strategy that works on TikTok isn't necessarily effective on YouTube or Instagram. This shows that the endorsement phenomenon is not universal and needs to be researched more deeply, especially in the context of MSMEs that have limitations in reaching the market at large. The inconsistency of the results of this study is a reference for researchers in identifying the influence of *Content Creator Endorsements* on consumer purchase decisions.

The results of this research are expected to contribute to two aspects, namely theoretical and practical. From the theoretical side, this study will enrich the literature on the role of endorsement in digital marketing, especially in the MSME segment, as well as provide a useful research map for further research. From a practical perspective, the results of this study can be a strategic reference for MSME actors in determining the right promotion model through collaboration with content creators. In the midst of increasingly fierce market competition, MSMEs are required to be smart in utilizing technology and communication strategies to remain relevant and competitive.

RESEARCH METHOD
### Respondent Profile
1. Respondent Profiles by Gender

Graph 1 Respondent Profiles **by Gender**
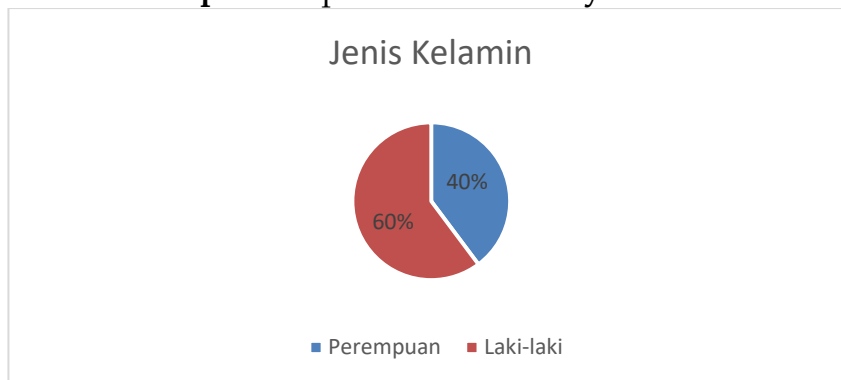
The graph implies that the dominance of female respondents in this study is 60%. Psychologically, women are often more influenced by emotions, moods, or social factors in making purchasing decisions. They may be more sensitive to advertisements and promotions of attractive products, and are more likely to purchase items that meet aesthetic or emotional needs, such as fashion, cosmetics, or household items that can improve their quality of life. In addition, many women feel that purchasing certain items or experiences can provide satisfaction or happiness, which in turn makes them shop more often.
2. Respondent Profiles by Age

Graph 2 Respondent Profiles **by Age**
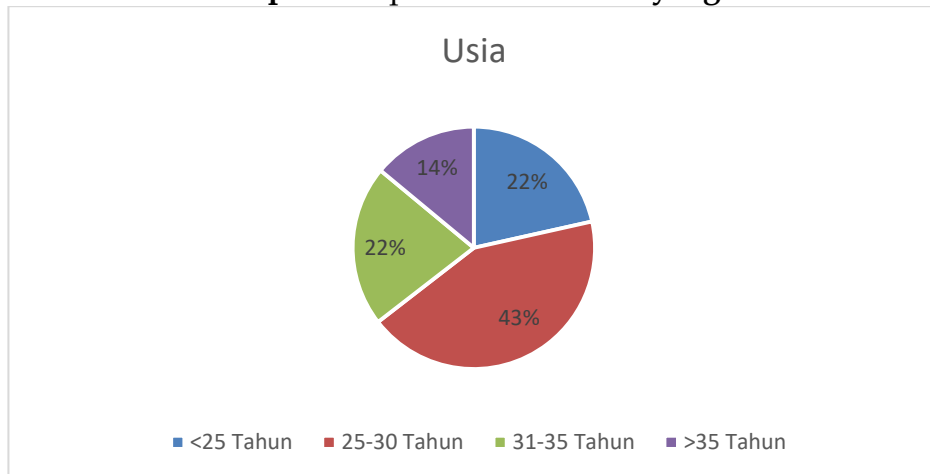
Consumers aged 25-30 dominated the study. The age of 25-30 years is often considered a more consumptive period in a person's life as it achieves financial independence.

3. Water Heater

Questionnaire testing is a process that is carried out to measure the validity and reliability of a measuring tool (in this case a questionnaire) before it is used in data collection in research. The questionnaire test aims to ensure that the questionnaire used can produce accurate and consistent data. Here are the two main aspects of the questionnaire test:

4. Validity Test

Table 1. Validity Test

No.	Variabel	Item	;r- Calculate	; r- Table	[Remarks
1	X1	1	0,631	ll0,227	AValid
	(*Endorsenent*)	2	0,768	ll0,227	AValid
		3	0,688	ll0,227	AValid
		4	0,799	ll0,227	AValid
		5	0,759	ll0,227	AValid
2	And	1	0,900	ll0,227	AValid
	(Purchase Decision)	2	0,888	ll0,227	AValid
		3	0,815	ll0,227	AValid
		4	0,885	ll0,227	AValid
		5	0,895	ll0,227	AValid

The validity value meets the criteria because the calculation>rtable then the relationship between the indicator and the measured variable can be considered statistically significant. This shows that the indicators used have a fairly strong correlation with the variables studied.

5. Reliability Test

Table 2 Reliability Test

Variabel	Cronbach Alpha	N items	Information

Independent Variables			
Endorsment	0.917	5	Reliable
Variable Dependency			
Purchase Quality	0.880	5	Reliable

Based on the results of Cronbach's Alpha calculations, the value of each is more than 0.600, which indicates that the data used has met the reliability or reliability test. This indicates that the measurement instruments used, such as questionnaires or scales to measure the variables studied, are consistent in giving similar results each time they are measured. With Cronbach's Alpha values higher than 0.600, it can be concluded that the results of this study are trustworthy and have a solid basis for drawing conclusions.

Classic Assumption Test
1. Normality Test

Table 3. Normality Test

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test

			Unstandardized Residual
N			75
Normal Parameters[a,b]	Mean		.0000000
	Std. Deviation		1.42457747
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute		.097
	Positive		.097
	Negative		-.084
Test Statistic			.097
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)[c]			.078
Monte Carlo Sig. (2-tailed)[d]	Sig.		.075
	99% Confidence Interval	Lower Bound	.068
		Upper Bound	.081

a. Test distribution is Normal.

b. Calculated from data.

c. Lilliefors Significance Correction.

d. Lilliefors' method based on 10000 Monte Carlo samples with starting seed 2000000.

The results indicated that normality was met with the criterion of 0.078>0.05.

2. Multicollinearity Test

Table 4. Multicollinearity Test Results

Coefficients[a]

| Model		Unstandardized Coefficients B	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	6.370	.820		7.771	<,001		
	Endorsement	.705	.041	.868	17.282	<,001	1.000	1.000

a. Dependent Variable: KeputusanPembelian

A multicollinearity test showing a tolerance value of 1,000 and a VIF (Variance Inflation Factor) of 1.00, it can be concluded that there are no significant multicollinearity problems in the regression model. According to (Ghozali, 2020) a tolerance value greater than 0.1 and a VIF value of less than 10 indicates that there is no high correlation between independent variables.

Therefore, the regression model used can be considered stable, and the regression coefficient estimation can be trusted without any interference caused by multicollinearity.

3. Heterokedasticity Test

Figure 1. Heterokedasticity Test Results
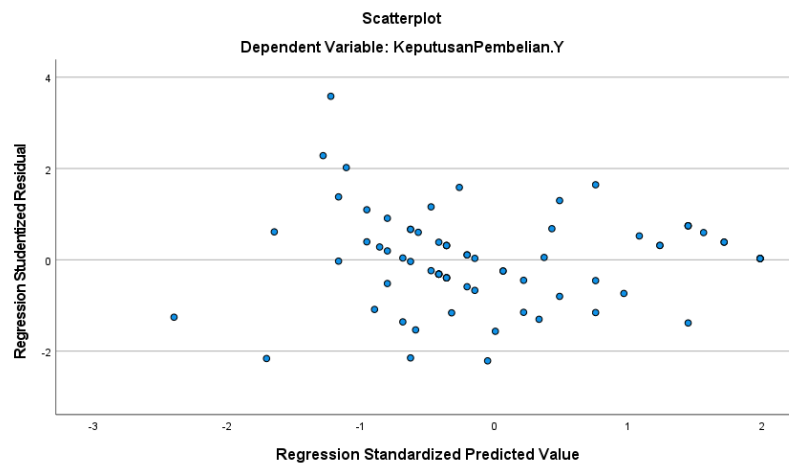
The spots are formed irregularly, this indicates that the data is not experiencing symptoms as tested. Thus, the assumption of homoskedasticity is met, which means that the model error does not depend on the value of independent variables and does not show a systematic pattern. This condition ensures that the regression model used can provide accurate and reliable estimates, and the results of the analysis are valid.

Uji Hypothesis

1. Multiple Linear Regression Test

Table 5. Multiple Linear Regression Test Results

Coefficientsa

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Itself.
1	(Constant)	6.370	.820		7.771	.000
	Endorsement	.705	.041	.868	17.282	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Purchasing Decision

Intercept (Konstanta) = 6,370

This value indicates that when the independent variable of Endorsement is zero, then the predicted value for the Purchase Decision is 6.370. This means that without any influence from endorsements at all, the purchase decision remains at the base of 6,370.

Koefisien Endorsement = 0,705

This value indicates that each increase of one unit on the Endorsement variable will increase the Purchase Decision value by 0.705, assuming there is no change in the other variables. In other words, the higher the level of endorsement by content creators, the greater the consumer's decision to make a purchase.

Partial Test

Table 6. Partial Test Results

Coefficientsa

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Itself.
1	(Constant)	6.370	.820		7.771	.000
	Endorsement	.705	.041	.868	17.282	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Purchasing Decision

A significance value of 0.000 indicates that the pvalue is very small (less than 0.05), which means that the results of the hypothesis test are significant. In other words, the purchase decision is influenced by the endorsements made by the content creator. Since the significance value for these two variables is 0.000, which is smaller than 0.05, the zero hypothesis is rejected, and it can be concluded that *digital marketing* and product design do have a significant effect on the variables measured.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Content creators play an important role in shaping consumer perception of a product through social media. Through intense interaction with their followers, content creators are able to build a positive image of the products they promote. Consumers tend to trust reviews or recommendations from the figures they follow, especially if the content created feels authentic and not excessive. In this case, content creators not only convey information, but also affect consumer emotions and beliefs. Therefore, endorsements are one of the factors that can drive purchase decisions emotionally and rationally.

The value of the regression coefficient of 0.705 indicates that every one unit increase in the endorsement variable will increase the value of the purchase decision by 0.705 units. This indicates that endorsement influence is in a strong category. The more often or the higher the quality of endorsements made by content creators, the greater the impact on consumer purchasing decisions. These findings are the basis for MSMEs to start leveraging the power of digital in building relationships with consumers through influential third parties. In today's digital marketing context, the communication power of content creators cannot be underestimated. In addition, the standardized coefficient (Beta) value of 0.868 shows that endorsement is a very dominant variable in the regression model. This value is close to 1, which indicates that endorsements have the greatest contribution to changes in the dependent variable, namely the purchase decision. This means that, compared to other factors, endorsements by content creators are the most decisive in encouraging consumers to buy. This also strengthens the argument that MSMEs should allocate sufficient resources to promote through endorsements. This strong influence must certainly be used strategically and sustainably.

The effectiveness of endorsements is also greatly influenced by the content creator's communication style that is more relaxed, personalized, and relatable. Unlike conventional advertising, endorsements by content creators tend to be packaged in the form of stories or personal experiences that are more easily

accepted by the audience. This less formal delivery style actually increases consumer trust and closeness to the product being promoted. Consumers feel that they are getting advice from friends, not from commercial ads. This makes endorsements a very effective communication medium in building consumer loyalty. Overall, endorsements by content creators have been proven to have a significant and positive influence on consumer purchasing decisions for MSME products. Through the data obtained, it can be concluded that this strategy is not only worth considering, but can also be used as one of the priorities in MSME promotion planning. Endorsements are able to combine elements of trust, exposure, and emotional communication in one very effective medium. By utilizing the power of social media and the influence of content creators, MSMEs can expand the market and increase the competitiveness of their products. Therefore, the use of endorsements is a strategic step that is relevant to modern marketing concepts.

Endorsements by content creators can influence the purchase decision of MSME products through *the Theory of Reasoned Action* (TRA), which explains how subjective attitudes and norms affect a person's intention to take an action, which in this case is the decision to buy. According to TRA, purchasing decisions are influenced by two main factors: attitudes towards the action and existing subjective norms. A person's attitude towards an action arises from their evaluation of the consequences of the action. When a content creator who has credibility and positive influence endorses an MSME product, they form a positive attitude among their audience. For example, if the content creator states that the MSME product is of high quality, useful, or in accordance with the lifestyle of their audience, then the audience tends to consider the product as a good choice and worth buying. This positive attitude increases the likelihood of the audience deciding to buy the product.

In addition, TRA also includes the factor of subjective norms, which refers to the social influence or expectations of others in the individual's social environment. Content creators who have a large and loyal following are often respected or idolized figures (Kawilarang et al., 2022). When they recommend a product, audiences feel a social pressure or drive to follow the recommendation, because they believe that important people in their lives or their social groups may also support or follow what the content creator suggests. This makes the audience feel more confident to buy these MSME products, because they feel that they are in accordance with the norms or standards that exist in their community.

These two factors, positive attitudes towards products and subjective norms formed from social influences, shape the intention to buy. This intention is a key step before someone finally takes action to buy the product. With strong endorsements from content creators, consumers' intention to buy MSME products becomes greater, because they feel confident and driven by the influence of figures they trust (Fradana, 2021).

CONCLUSION

The results of the study show that endorsements by content creators have a significant effect on MSME purchase decisions. The significance value of 0.000 and the regression coefficient of 0.705 prove that the higher the endorsement activity,

the higher the purchase decision. Endorsements have proven to be an effective and relevant marketing strategy in increasing sales of MSME products.

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