

Examining The Mechanism of Influencers to Motivate Urge of Impulsive Buying Through Tik Tok

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ABSTRACT

The rapid growth of social commerce has intensified the role of social media influencers in shaping consumer purchasing behavior, particularly impulsive buying on platforms such as TikTok. This study examines the mechanism through which influencer credibility, message credibility, and media credibility influence consumers' urge to buy impulsively, with trust in branded posts serving as a mediating variable. Grounded in the Stimulus–Organism–Response (SOR) framework, this research employs a quantitative approach using survey data collected from 150 Indonesian TikTok users who have purchased products promoted by a social media influencer. Data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with SmartPLS 4.0. Results in this research indicate a positive effect of trust in branded posts on Urge to Buy Impulsively. The findings additionally indicate that the trust in branded posts is heavily influenced by Influencer Credibility, Message Credibility, and Media Credibility.

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Introduction

Social media development has been affecting global information sharing and marketing as the digital era develops. According to Kumar (2020) people are constantly operating on their laptops or browsing through their smartphones these days. Many people now consider social media to be essential, and they routinely check it all day long. Consequently, it is not surprising that social media platforms have grown in importance as marketing tools in the modern day. Social media platforms are now a common way for businesses to accomplish relationship marketing goals and raise their brand value (Chakraborty et al., 2018; Doodoo, 2018; Ibrahim et al., 2020; Kumar et al., 2020; Ott et al., 2016; Papisolomou et al., 2012; Pinto et al., 2019; Shen et al., 2013).

As social media grows, marketers need to pay more attention to the importance of leveraging social media marketing campaigns such as social media influencers. Nowadays, deploying influencers for branding has become a defining element of social media marketing campaigns (De Veirman et al., 2017). Many businesses use the service of social media

influencers to help their business growth. In Indonesia, using social media influencers to spread marketing campaign messaging, particularly to raise consumer awareness, has become commonplace. This social media influencer phenomenon has a big influence on the consumption patterns of society, especially the millennial generation. A lifestyle that pays more attention to prestige makes society carried away by the current of contemporary styles popularized by social media influencers. The large public consumption of products promoted by social media influencers is supported by Edelman (2018) which states that the level of trust in social media reached 51% in 2018. The trust built by social media influencers with their followers causes consumption of a brand to rise.

Social media influencers play a significant role in digital marketing campaigns in Indonesia, particularly in attracting consumer awareness and influencing purchasing decisions (Ramadanty et al., 2019; Erwin et al., 2023). They face difficulties like maintaining content quality and tax concerns, but they also present potential like more trust from followers and affordable advertising (Evert & Rachman, 2020). Studies have shown that social media influencers positively impact consumer attitudes and purchase intentions, making them valuable assets for product branding, community building, and loyalty development (Azkiah et al., 2023). These findings provide important insights for marketers and researchers on leveraging influencers effectively in the digital era (Azkiah et al., 2023; Erwin et al., 2023).

Studies have mostly concentrated on examining social media influencers (SMI) characteristics like popularity, attractiveness, and expertise, ignoring the possible significance of additional communication elements like media and content, which could be vital in enhancing trust in the influencer's branded posts. Additionally, social media influencers' capacity to create viral effects is crucial since it allows brands to use social media campaigns to reach new market segments. Finding a strong influencer who can turn their followers into actual customers has therefore become crucial in SMI marketing. Making it more difficult for businesses and marketers to identify what makes influencers' branded posts believable to their audience. Literature has explored the role of influencer credibility in obtaining favorable influencer and brand-related outcomes (Andonopoulos et al., 2023; Venciute et al., 2023; Kim and Kim, 2021; Hughes et al., 2019; De Veirman et al., 2017). There are several choices of social media application for influencers to build their reputation, TikTok is one of the social media sites that influencers typically use.

TikTok has emerged as a significant digital marketing platform in Indonesia (Krisdanu et al., 2023). Its rapid growth and widespread adoption have enabled business agencies to utilize specialized content strategies and targeted advertising tactics to engage diverse consumer segments effectively. Among its various features, live streaming has become one of the most prominent and strategic promotional tools in contemporary digital marketing. As a real-time and interactive format, live streaming allows brands to foster direct communication, enhance consumer engagement, and strengthen purchase intentions. Consequently, producers frequently collaborate with influencers as intermediaries to deliver

persuasive promotional messages (Lin et al., 2022). However, the effectiveness of such collaborations largely depends on the influencer's perceived authenticity and transparency. Inconsistent brand endorsements or overly commercialized content may undermine credibility and weaken consumer trust (Erwin et al., 2023).

In the rapidly evolving landscape of social media marketing, influencer credibility has therefore emerged as a central determinant of consumer attitudes and behavioral responses. Influencers function not merely as content creators but as digital opinion leaders who possess specialized knowledge, social capital, and persuasive capacity to shape audience perceptions. As Kwiatak (2021) suggests, influencers who are perceived as knowledgeable, authentic, and relatable are more likely to cultivate strong trust among their followers. This trust enhances the persuasive power of their recommendations and plays a foundational role in determining whether audiences accept or reject promotional messages.

The effectiveness of influencer communication is closely tied to credibility of the message sent by their contents. It is largely shaped by the strength and quality of arguments presented, as well as the consistency and clarity of the content. However, credibility in digital environments extends beyond the message itself. It also encompasses source credibility (the influencer) and media credibility (the platform on which the message is delivered), forming a multidimensional construct (Golan, 2010). Valentini (2018) emphasizes that evaluating credibility across sources, messages, and media is essential for effective strategic communication. This consideration becomes increasingly important in the social media era, where misinformation and low-quality content can easily circulate, influencing how users assess the reliability of online information (Jo, 2008).

Customer trust in a content is often determined by a combination of cognitive, emotional, and contextual factors, including familiarity with the sender, disposition to trust, influencer credibility, and endorsement, with topic involvement moderating some effects (Hazarika et al., 2019). Cues from relevant posts and reviews of products or brands may leverage consumer trust in the posts, influencing their attitudes and purchasing behaviors, since social media users frequently search for trustworthy content when reading reviews and posts to help them make better decisions when making purchases. (Casaló et al., 2015). Cues that lessen customer skepticism about the post's content might boost consumer confidence in it and produce favorable responses (such as attitude and purchase intention) toward the brands and goods (Schlosser et al., 2006). One important behavioral outcome influenced by this trust-building process is impulse buying. Early studies in the 1950s and 1960s conceptualized impulse buying primarily as a situational phenomenon triggered by store environments and specific product categories. However, by the 1970s, scholars recognized that any product could be purchased impulsively, shifting the focus toward individual psychological characteristics. Impulse buying was subsequently defined as a sudden, strong, and spontaneous urge to make an immediate purchase (Rook & Hoch, 1985; Rook, 1987; Faber, 2010). In contemporary digital environments, credible influencers and trustworthy

branded posts may stimulate this spontaneous urge, accelerate consumers' decision-making processes and increase the likelihood of unplanned purchases.

In the previous study by Shamim et al., (2024) data collection process is still considered generalized, as stated in the previous study that data collection was carried out voluntarily where individuals expressed their willingness to participate. Furthermore, previous research explores the significant role of Fashion Influencers (FIs) in shaping consumers' Urge to Buy Impulsively (UBI) within the realm of social commerce. The findings reveal that trust in fashion influencer (FI) branded posts is positively influenced by Influencer Credibility, Message Credibility, and Media Credibility, which collectively enhance UBI. The study also emphasizes the moderating role of persuasive knowledge, showing that even while consumers trust the influencer's material, they are less likely to feel UBI if they are more aware of marketing strategies.

This research explores more specifically regarding selection of respondents, gathered data collection in a narrow manner only for the followers of the selected influencer in this research. This research carefully selects respondents who follow and have an experience purchasing a product advertised by the influencers selected in this research. For that reason, this study investigates how social media influencers on TikTok influence consumers' impulsive buying behavior in Indonesia. It focuses on three key factors such as influencer credibility, message credibility, and media credibility and examines how they build trust in branded posts, which in turn triggers the urge to buy impulsively.

Definition of Variables

Influencer Credibility

In social commerce, influencer credibility is the overall perception that an influencer is believable and dependable as a source of product information. It is not just about popularity it is about whether followers trust what the influencer says enough to act on it. The audience's opinion of the influencer's knowledge and dependability is known as influencer credibility, and it influences how the audience accepts messages and behaves (Salam, 2023). Influencer credibility is believed to be the most important prerequisite for effective advertising since influencers enhance a brand, good, or service (Lee et al, 2020). Finding and using public figures who could sway potential customers to participate in a brand's marketing campaigns through sponsored content is known as the use of influencer marketing (Scott, 2015). Djafarova and Rushworth (2017) pointed out that word-of-mouth and purchasing decisions may be influenced by the credibility of influencers. However, if influencers lacked the ability to influence others, working with them would be pointless. Influencers therefore handle their personal social media accounts as part of their work in order to grow their following of active users and gain their credibility (Dhanesh et al, 2019). Credibility thus becomes a crucial factor in choosing influencers (KEMEÇ et al, 2021).

Message Credibility

Message credibility refers to the perceived reliability of the message, encompassing elements such as informational quality, currency or accuracy (Metzger et al., 2003). Message credibility is a crucial aspect of credibility evaluation, focusing on the content and design of messages rather than their sources (Valentini, 2018). It is different from media and source credibility because it only considers the design and content of the message (Kwasniewicz et al., 2020). Appelman et al (2016) The perceived veracity, correctness, and plausibility of the information in a communication are referred to as message credibility. A message's form, source, and compliance with reference points are some of the other elements that affect its credibility in addition to its substance (Chambers, 1999). It has been discovered that the top indications of message credibility, especially in an online context, are authenticity, accuracy, and believability (Sundar et al, 2016).

Media Credibility

Media credibility, which is a user-subject perception, is the extent to which the audience believes that the information provider and their content can be believed. The primary metric for assessing how an audience views media and information in communication is media credibility. Research on media credibility has broadened its focus beyond information sources to include message content and communication routes (Dang, 2022). Celebrity endorsers, which can include authors, TV personalities, movie stars, and sports figures, typically have established their impact through conventional media like radio, television, and magazines. Notable bloggers, vloggers, and celebrities who rose to prominence on social media are examples of non-traditional celebrities (Lee, 2018). The importance of attractiveness, reliability, and experience has been emphasized more and more in social media situations in recent years. Since peer ads on social media are viewed as more credible than those in traditional media, credibility was discovered to have an impact on the value of social media advertising (Shareef et al, 2019).

Trust in Branded Posts

Trust in branded posts refers to followers' belief that influencer-created branded content is honest, reliable, and credible, reflecting confidence in both the message and the influencer's intentions (Yuan, 2019). The perceived honesty and dependability of influencer-generated material that highlights or supports a brand can be thought of as trust in branded posts. Customers' perception that the information is objective and real is reflected in it (Flavian, 2020). Customers are led to assume that the advice and product details are impartial and correct when they have faith in the influencer since it fosters a sense of dependability and confidence in their knowledge and judgment. Nearly 40% of surveyed Twitter users have made a purchase as a result of an influencer's tweet, according to recent data from Twitter and Annalect (Karp, 2016).

Trust in branded posts functions as the key psychological mechanism linking external credibility cues to impulsive buying because it represents the internal cognitive and emotional state through which consumers interpret and act upon marketing stimuli. While

influencer credibility, message credibility, and media credibility serve as external signals that indicate reliability, these factors do not directly trigger purchasing behavior. Instead, they first shape consumers' level of trust toward the branded content. This trust reduces perceived risk and uncertainty, which are typically barriers to purchase decisions, especially in online environments. As a result, consumers experience lower cognitive resistance and are less motivated to engage in extensive information processing. Credibility signals from influencers, messages, and media first build trust in branded posts. This trust reduces uncertainty and cognitive effort, allowing consumers to make quick, emotionally driven decisions, which leads to impulsive buying.

Urge to Buy Impulsively

Urge to buy impulsively refers to the desire of consumers to do impulsive buying and become an epidemic as a result of advances in information technology and e-commerce (Zhu et al, 2019). It represents an instantaneous internal drive that emerges in reaction to outside stimuli such emotional triggers, product aesthetics, or advertising cues (Chen et al., 2019). It is characterized by unplanned purchases, difficulty in control, and emotional responses. According to Chan (2017) numerous factors have been identified as antecedents of impulse buying, including user characteristics (e.g., impulsiveness and hedonic needs), online store characteristics (e.g., ease of use, interactivity), marketing stimuli (e.g., bonuses and discounts), and product characteristics (e.g., type and price). The rise of e-commerce and social media has reshaped modern impulsive buying behavior. Additionally, individual differences in impulsiveness moderate these effects, with highly impulsive consumers focusing more on hedonic value and experiencing stronger urges to buy impulsively while browsing (Zhang et al., 2018).

Method

This study examines the correlation between factors using a quantitative methodology. Quantitative research methods involve systematic investigation using measurable variables and statistical analysis to explain phenomena and test hypotheses (Helmold, 2019). These methods aim to be objective, reliable, and generalizable, minimizing researcher bias and allowing for application to larger populations. Quantitative studies typically follow a structured process, including data collection through surveys, experiments, observations, or content analysis. Researchers identify specific variables of interest and collect relevant numerical data. This approach is widely used across various fields, including natural and social sciences, education, and business. Quantitative research can involve measuring attitudes, opinions, and behaviors, with results often presented in statistical form. Understanding quantitative methods is crucial for developing scientific knowledge and informing decision-making in multiple domains. Proper selection and implementation of quantitative methodologies are essential for conducting successful original research.

The data used in this study is primary data. Primary data is data obtained directly from the original source or the first party as the information sought. The questionnaire was

distributed online through Google Forms. The respondents were randomly picked from the 'followers' section of the influencer profile to ensure that the respondents are close to the criteria. The research was held in Indonesia. The primary data used in this study came from a survey that was administered via Google Forms. The surveys were disseminated immediately through WhatsApp and other social media sites, as well as through private messages. A 6-point Likert scale was utilized to measure replies in this survey. This research used purposive data collection method and gathered 150 respondents in total that were applicable to the research. This research consists of 15 indicators, formula by Joseph, F. Hair were used to find out how many respondents are needed in data collection. The following calculation $N = 5-10 \times (\text{number of indicators}) = 10 \times 15 = 150$.

Results and Discussion

Collinearity VIF Test

The goal of VIF collinearity is to ensure that collinearity does not significantly affect the structural model's estimation. In this study, each variable's VIF value is less than 3, indicating that there are no variations in the research model's collinearity.

Table 1. Collinearity VIF Tests

	IC	MC	MeC	Tr	UBI
IC				1.562	
MC				2.070	
MeC				2.128	
Tr					2.161

Influencer Credibility (1.562), Message Credibility (2.070), Media Credibility (2.128), Trust in branded Posts (2.161).

Coefficient of Determination Test (R-Square)

Table 2. R-Square

	R-Square	R-Square Adjusted
Trust in Branded Posts	0.796	0.791
Urge to Buy Impulsively	0.744	0.742

Based on the data presented in Table above, it can be seen that the R-Square value for the trust in branded posts variable is 0.796. Such value explains that the percentage of trust in branded posts can be explained by influencer credibility, message credibility, and media credibility at 79.6%. Finally, the R-Square value for the urge to buy impulsively is 0.744. This explains that the effectiveness of the urge to buy impulsively can be explained

by trust in branded posts of 74.4%. In the table above, the adjusted R-Square value is also displayed. This value is used if there is more than one independent variable. Adjusted R Square is an R2 value that is adjusted so that the image is closer to the quality of the model exploration in the population. From the table above, it shows that the Adjusted R Square (R2) for the trust in branded posts variable is 0.791 or 79.1% while the remaining 20.9% is explained by other factors. The green purchase intention variable has an adjusted R-Square value of 0.742 or 74.2%, the remaining 25.8% is influenced by other factors.

Hypothesis Testing

The results of this test can be used to answer the research hypotheses. To test the hypotheses, T statistics and P values are evaluated. According to Hair et al. (2022), there are principles in calculating hypothesis tests: P value < 0.05 and T value > 1.96. Four hypotheses have been accepted, since the P-values <0.05 and T-statistics more than 1.96. It can be concluded that all hypotheses show T statistical results of more than 1.96.

Table 3. Hypothesis Test

	Original Sample (O)	T-Statistics	P-Values	Results
Influencer Credibility->Trust in Branded Posts	0.216	3.164	0.002	H1 Accepted
Message Credibility->Trust in Branded Posts	0.430	6.582	0.000	H2 Accepted
Media Credibility->Trust in Branded Posts	0.308	3.984	0.000	H3 Accepted
Trust in Branded Posts->Urge to buy Impulsively	0.863	6.551	0.000	H4 Accepted

Predictive Relevance (Q square)

Q-Square, another name for predictive relevance, is a metric used to assess how well data fits. Similar to coefficient determination (R-Square), higher Q-Square values may indicate a higher degree of data conformance. The Q-Square computation is as follows:

$$\begin{aligned}
 \text{Q-Square} &= 1 - [(1 - R \text{ square } 1) \times (1 - R \text{ square } 2)] \\
 &= 1 - [(1 - 0.796) \times (1 - 0.744)] \\
 &= 1 - (0.204 \times 0.256) \\
 &= 1 - 0.052 \\
 &= 0.948
 \end{aligned}$$

The Q-Square score of this study is 0.948, indicating that the research model can account for 94.8% of the diversity of research data, according to the calculations above. The remaining 5.2% of the value is due to other, non-research-related variables. Thus, it can be concluded that this study approach is highly appropriate based on these data.

Conclusion

This study looks at how Indonesians' impulsive purchasing tendencies are influenced by their trust in branded posts. Managers, specialists, and industry researchers may benefit from this study. 150 qualified responders received questionnaires via Google Forms. SmartPLS 4.0 was used to examine the results. In order to ascertain how various factors impact shopping motivation and impulsive buying, this study investigated a number of possibilities.

Based on the result and discussion, it can be concluded that:

- 1) Influencer credibility does positively influence trust in the branded post.
- 2) Message credibility does positively influence trust in the branded post.
- 3) Media credibility does positively influence trust in the branded post.
- 4) Trust in the branded post does positively influence the urge to buy impulsively.

Based on the research findings, I have several recommendations. Firstly, future research should involve several influencers from different niches (fashion, beauty, tech, lifestyle). This will allow comparison across influencers with different credibility levels and content styles, providing more generalizable results. Second, future researchers should examine how platform differences (e.g., TikTok vs Instagram vs YouTube) affect trust and impulsive buying. Each platform has different content styles, algorithms, and audience behavior patterns that may influence the results. Lastly, if future researchers want to use quantitative methods only, researchers are encouraged to include a larger and more demographically diverse sample from various Indonesian regions that will help improve the accuracy and generalizability of the findings.

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