

The Influence of Influencer Marketing on Generation Z's Purchase Decision of Somethinc Products Through Perceived Value and Price Sensitivity

Putri Berlian Apriliyani¹, Mohamad Rifqy Roosdhani²
^{1,2} Nahdlatul Ulama Islamic University of Jepara, Indonesia
Email: berlianputri583@gmail.com^{1*}, rr@unisnu.ac.id²

*Koresponden penulis:
berlianputri583@gmail.com

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Abstract: *This study investigates the impact of influencer marketing on the buying choices of Generation Z consumers for Somethinc products, emphasizing the role of perceived value and price sensitivity as mediators. Utilizing influencer marketing is now crucial, especially with the beauty industry's shift to digital media and the high rate of social media adoption in Indonesia. Employing a quantitative methodology, this research collected primary data via structured surveys. A purposive sample of 133 Indonesian Generation Z buyers (aged 13-28) of Somethinc items was analyzed. SmartPLS 4.0 was applied to assess the structural and measurement models. Results show that influencer promotional efforts directly and positively affect purchase intent, price sensitivity, and perceived value. Additionally, price sensitivity and perceived value serve as successful mediators connecting influencer marketing to final purchasing actions.*

Keywords: *Influencer Marketing, Perceived Value, Price Sensitivity, Purchase Decision*

INTRODUCTION

The global marketing landscape is undergoing a significant shift toward a digital ecosystem, moving away from one-way mass communication strategies toward personalized interactions and digital word-of-mouth (WoM) (Wahyuni, 2025). A Market Insights report from Statista projects that total global advertising spending will reach nearly US\$1.1 trillion by 2024, dominated by digital channels (Datareportal, 2025). This phenomenon is particularly relevant in Indonesia, which has a high social media penetration rate, making it the largest market for digital natives in Southeast Asia (Ashar & Idris, 2019).

In this highly connected market, influencer marketing has become a core strategy that leverages individuals' credibility and appeal to influence consumer purchasing decisions (Anggraini & Ahmadi, 2024), as explained by the Source Credibility Model. This strategy is particularly crucial in the cosmetics and skincare industry, which relies on visual validation and trusted recommendations. Local brands like Somethinc the focus of this study rely on influencer marketing to build relevance amid a market dominated by Generation Z. This demographic tends to be skeptical of conventional advertising but highly responsive to influencers perceived as

authentic (Panjaitan & Simanjuntak, 2024). In this competitive landscape, companies are required to be innovative and responsive to market dynamics (Roosdhani et al., 2025), and must possess a deep understanding of consumer behavior to formulate competitive strategies (Komaryatin et al., 2025).

Although influencer communication has proven effective, previous research on its direct impact on purchasing decisions still yields conflicting results. Several studies have found a strong direct relationship, where influencer marketing is able to influence purchasing behavior by directly building consumer trust (Rohmawati & Ahmadi, 2025). Interaction with influencer content has also been shown to convert interest into independent purchases (Wilis & Faik, 2022), even without the need for an established brand (Maharani et al., 2025).

Conversely, other evidence suggests that this direct relationship is not always significant, thus requiring mediating variables, such as online customer reviews as a form of additional validation (Adriana & Syaefulloh, 2023). The impact of influencers on purchasing behavior has also been shown to increase significantly when filtered through psychological mediators such as brand awareness and perceived value (Maharani et al., 2025). This inconsistency in results highlights a critical research gap, indicating that the success of influencer marketing heavily depends on consumers' internal processes regarding benefits (value) and costs (price).

Addressing this research gap, the novelty of this study lies in the simultaneous integration of Perceived Value and Price Sensitivity within a dual-mediation model. Theoretically and methodologically, no study has explicitly compared the contributions of benefit-based and sacrifice-based mechanisms in explaining how influencer persuasion works in markets with many product alternatives (Dewi & Maradona, 2024).

Therefore, this study aims to examine the direct and indirect effects of influencer marketing on purchase decisions. Through this holistic approach, the study is expected to address the uncertainty regarding whether an influencer's appeal can trigger purchases directly, or whether its effectiveness depends heavily on its ability to enhance perceived value and reduce price sensitivity in consumers' minds.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Source Credibility Model

Previously, (Lengkawati & Saputra, 2021) explained that the success of promotions depends on three factors the communicator's expertise, reliability, and physical attractiveness. However, in today's digital ecosystem, (Szakal et al., 2024) offer a more in depth perspective, noting that credibility is not merely about physical appearance but rather an influencer's ability to shape consumer mindsets more persuasively than conventional advertising. This is reinforced

by (Angraini & Ahmadi, 2024), who state that trusted influencers are crucial for reducing consumer hesitation when shopping online. Studies by (Arhafa & Andarini, 2024) and (Panjaitan & Simanjuntak, 2024) also demonstrate that an influencer's expertise and honesty can enhance consumers' evaluations of a product, ultimately driving them to make a purchase. Therefore, the Source Credibility Theory serves as a crucial foundation for this study because it explains how influencers not only promote products but also help Generation Z feel confident in the value and pricing of Somethinc products.

Influencer Marketing

Unlike traditional advertising, which merely disseminates a message, influencer marketing has now become a key driver of direct transactions. (Lengkawati & Saputra, 2021) and (Keller et al., 2016) agree that this strategy leverages popular figures to attract interest and introduce brands to the public. To measure the success of this strategy, (Aprianto et al., 2024) breaks it down into six key criteria: authority, authenticity, influence, audience engagement, relevance, and reach. This comprehensive approach has proven effective, with (Hodijah et al., 2021) confirming that genuine interactions from influencers can effectively motivate consumers to make purchases.

Perceived Value

Simply put, (McDougall & Levesque, 2000) and (Lunarindiah, 2018) define perceived value as the comparison between the benefits a consumer receives from a product and the costs they have incurred. However, more recent literature suggests that this concept is not limited to rational calculations. Evaluating this worth is tightly linked to how consumers perceive quality; essentially, a buyer's personal judgment of a product's excellence dictates if it holds enough merit to justify a transaction (Aliryanti & Roosdhani, 2024). Based on (Tjiptono, 1995), as cited in (Nurochim et al., 2022), this construct is shaped by several key dimensions: emotional appeal, societal worth, quality evaluation, economic value (price-to-value ratio), and tangible proof. Maximizing these specific areas directly amplifies the overall worth experienced by the shopper. Furthermore, empirical findings from (Nurochim et al., 2022) establish that a heightened sense of perceived value acts as a major, positive catalyst in finalizing consumer purchase decisions.

Price Sensitivity

Conceptually, price sensitivity is not merely a consumer's tendency to seek out the lowest price, but rather a reflection of the psychological aversion (pain of paying) associated with bearing financial risk. (Aziz et al., 2015) define it as the extent to which buyers are aware of a product's price threshold. Furthermore, (Noh et al., 2013) conceptualize this price tolerance threshold as highly dynamic and a key determinant of whether consumers will remain loyal or switch to competitors. Prior investigations by (Ridwani et al., 2025) highlight that buyers

frequently exhibit strong reactions to pricing; specifically, heightened sensitivity often leads them to opt for more affordable or budget-friendly alternatives. Corroborating this, (Azzhara, 2026) points out that presenting an appealing price point is a critical factor that directly motivates consumers to finalize their buying actions.

Purchase Decision

(Trang & Sinambow, 2015) define a purchase decision as a psychological impulse stemming from an individual's desire to satisfy their needs. This process does not occur impulsively but rather through several systematic stages. According to (Kotler & Keller, 2009), the outcomes of this decision can be measured by several factors: which product is chosen, the preferred brand, where to shop, when to buy it, and how many units of the product are purchased.

Theoretical Contribution of the Mediation Model (Research Novelty)

Based on the conceptual review above, the theoretical novelty of this study lies in the integration of variables that form a double mediation model. While previous studies have often only examined the direct impact of influencers on sales, this study offers a more comprehensive framework. Based on Source Credibility Theory, the presence of an influencer is not believed to magically trigger a purchase. Instead, this persuasion must flow through two psychological pathways in consumers simultaneously: the benefit reinforcement pathway (maximizing Perceived Value) and the financial risk mitigation pathway (reducing Price Sensitivity). This model's integration underscores that Generation Z's purchasing decisions are the final outcome of a negotiation between the value successfully conveyed by the influencer and the price limit they can tolerate.

Hypothesis Formulation

Studies by (Nurmalasari et al., 2025) and (Kusumawati & Hasan, 2025) agree that influencers play a significant role in shaping young consumers' expectations of product benefits. By providing detailed and honest product reviews, influencers help address the drawback of online shopping, where consumers cannot try products in person. This makes the products seem more valuable to Generation Z. Consequently, this research formulates the following hypothesis: H1: *Influencer Marketing* has a positive and significant effect on *Perceived Value* among Generation Z.

Rather than simply asking for low prices, today's consumers place a high priority on a product's value. Research by (Pajriyanti, 2025) and (Pratama, 2024) demonstrates that authentic reviews from influencers make Generation Z feel that the offered price is reasonable. This shifts their focus from merely the "price tag" to the understanding that the quality received is indeed worth the cost. Consequently, this research formulates the following hypothesis:

H2: *Influencer marketing* has a positive and significant effect on *price sensitivity* among

Generation Z.

Consumers' purchasing decisions depend heavily on the trade-off between the money spent and the benefits received. (Iwan et al., 2025) and (Hargowseno, 2021) emphasize that when consumers perceive a product's benefits to far outweigh its price, that perception becomes the strongest motivator for them to make an immediate purchase. Consequently, this research formulates the following hypothesis:

H3: *Perceived Value* has a positive and significant effect on *Purchase Decision*

Many people assume that price-sensitive consumers will refrain from shopping. However, studies by the Ulil Albab Institute (2025) and Pajriyanti (2025) show the opposite. Young, budget-conscious consumers are actually more likely to make a purchase immediately if they see a compelling offer that convinces them the product is well worth the price and beneficial to them. Consequently, this research formulates the following hypothesis:

H4: *Price Sensitivity* has a positive and significant effect on *Purchase Decision*

In addition to undergoing a careful decision-making process, influencer content can also trigger spontaneous purchases. Nur Khasanah (2024) and Indrastati & Roosdhani (2026), concluded that influencers' authentic communication style, which is favored by young people, can shorten consumers' decision-making time. Social proof and recommendations from figures they trust can instantly turn initial curiosity into a sure sale. Consequently, this research formulates the following hypothesis:

H5: *Influencer Marketing* has a positive and significant effect on *Purchase Decision*.

METHOD

This research employed a quantitative approach focused on Gen Z individuals who had previously purchased items from the Somethinc brand. By applying a purposive, non-probability sampling technique, the researchers gathered a total of 133 participants comprising both genders between the ages of 13 and 28. The number of participants was established using the criteria proposed by (Hair, 2010). Given the indefinite total population, this framework recommends a baseline cohort of five to ten times the number of research indicators, which ultimately justified the selection of 133 established Somethinc buyers. Original data was acquired directly from this target demographic through the administration of structured surveys. To analyze the compiled dataset, SmartPLS 4.0 was utilized to thoroughly assess both the measurement and structural models, in addition to executing rigorous hypothesis verifications.

RESULT

Respondent Description

The participants in this research were categorized according to key demographic profiles, specifically their age, gender, and occupational status, as detailed below in Table 1.

Table 1. Description of Respondents

Category	Description	Number	Percentage
Gender	Male	33	25
	Female	100	75
	Total	133	100
Age	19 - 21 years old	54	41
	22 - 24 years old	46	35
	25 - 28 years old	33	24
	Total	133	100
Status	Student	2	2
	College Student	75	56
	Workers/Business	56	42
	Total	133	100

As outlined in Table 1, the sample is predominantly female (75%) and largely consists of young adults aged 19-24 (76%). Occupationally, college students and students form the majority (58%), followed by workers/business owners (42%).

Testing the Measurement Model (*Outer Model*)

Data processing for this research was executed utilizing SmartPLS 4.0 software. Data analysis within the outer (measurement) model was conducted based on three primary metrics: convergent validity, discriminant validity, and reliability.

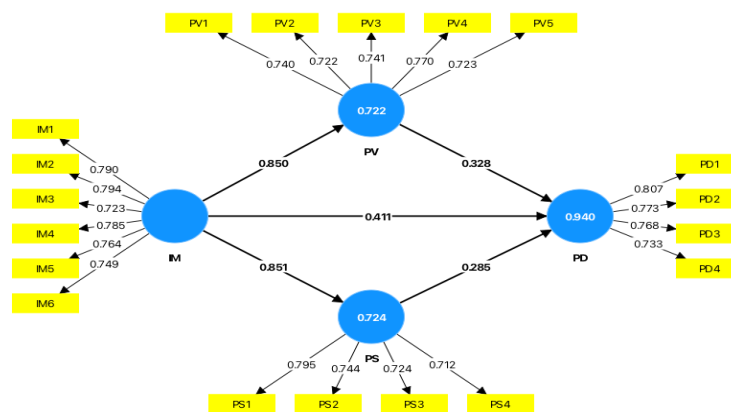


Figure 2. PLS Algorithm Model

Convergent Validity Test

Convergent validity was assessed by evaluating outer loadings and AVE metrics. Since all outer loadings exceeded 0.70 and all AVE scores surpassed 0.50, it was confirmed that every

instrument item measuring Influencer Marketing, Perceived Value, Price Sensitivity, and Purchase Decision is valid.

Discriminant Validity Test

The assessment of discriminant validity requires that each construct demonstrates a Fornell-Larcker Criterion value above 0.7.

Table 2. *Fornell-Larcker Criterion*

Construct	IM	PD	PS	PV
IM	0.768			
PD	0.932	0.771		
PS	0.851	0.905	0.745	
PV	0.850	0.912	0.823	0.739

Source: *Processed Primary Data, 2025*

The data presented in Table 2 indicates that the diagonal values (Fornell-Larcker Criterion) for each construct are higher than their correlations with other constructs, thereby confirming the discriminant validity of the measurement model.

Reliability Test

Table 3 below summarizes the outcomes of the reliability analysis, which were measured via Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability.

Table 3. *Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability Values*

Construct	<i>Cronbach's Alpha</i>	<i>Composite Reliability</i>
IM	0.861	0.862
PV	0.793	0.794
PS	0.733	0.743
PD	0.772	0.777

Source: *Processed Primary Data, 2025*

Table 3 highlights that the > 0.70 threshold for composite reliability and Cronbach's alpha is satisfied by all latent constructs. This outcome confirms the reliability and internal consistency of the variables utilized as measurement tools.

Structural Model Testing (*Inner Model*)

Model Fit (*Goodness of Fit*)

This study evaluates the overall appropriateness of the structural model using the Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) and Normed Fit Index (NFI). The resulting metrics are outlined in Table 4.

Table 4. *Goodness of Fit (GoF) Values*

Construct	<i>Saturated Model</i>	<i>Estimated Model</i>
SRMR	0.118	0.119
NFI	0.542	0.538

Source: *Processed Primary Data, 2025*

As shown in Table 4, the SRMR value is 0.118. While values below 0.10 are generally considered indicative of an acceptable fit, an SRMR slightly above this threshold suggests a less-than-ideal model fit. However, considering the exploratory nature of the constructs, the structural model remains acceptable for proceeding with hypothesis testing.

Coefficient of Determination (R-Square)

The R-square metric assesses the predictive power of independent variables over dependent ones, with thresholds of 0.67, 0.33, and 0.19 categorizing the influence as strong, moderate, or weak. The calculated coefficient of determination values are summarized below in Table 5.

Table 5. *R-Square Values*

Variable (Construct)	<i>R-Square</i>	<i>Adjusted R-Square</i>
PV	0.722	0.720
PS	0.724	0.721
PD	0.940	0.939

Source: *Processed Primary Data, 2025*

The findings in Table 5 show a robust R-square of 0.940 and an adjusted R-square of 0.939 for Purchase Decision. This signifies that 94% of the variations in the dependent variable (Y) are driven by the studied constructs, leaving just 6% to be explained by unmeasured external variables.

Hypothesis Testing Results

Direct Effect Test Results

Table 6 presents the direct effect path coefficients. For a measurement to achieve statistical significance, it must yield a t-statistic over 1.65 and a p-value of less than 0.05.

Table 6. *Path Coefficients (Direct Effect)*

Variable	<i>Original Sample</i>	<i>T Statistics</i>	<i>P Values</i>
IM -> PD	0.411	6.678	0.000
IM -> PV	0.850	34,368	0.000
IM -> PS	0.851	32,368	0.000
PV -> PD	0.328	5,570	0.000
PS -> PD	0.285	4.615	0.000

Source: *Processed Primary Data, 2025*

As presented in Table 6, all direct hypotheses are strongly supported (p-values < 0.05). Influencer Marketing demonstrates a substantial positive direct influence on Purchase Decisions, Perceived Value, and Price Sensitivity. Furthermore, the data confirms that both Perceived Value and Price Sensitivity independently exert a positive and significant impact on Purchase Decisions.

Indirect Effect Test Results (Specific Indirect Effect)

The mediating effects were analyzed by applying a bootstrapping approach, as summarized in Table 7 below.

Table 7. *Specific Indirect Effect*

Variable	Original Sample	T Statistics	P Values
IM->PV->PD	0.279	5.747	0.000
IM->PS-> PD	0.242	4.743	0.000

Source: Processed Primary Data, 2025

The findings in Table 7 concisely confirm that the two proposed mediation pathways are statistically valid. Both Perceived Value and Price Sensitivity serve as legitimate and significant mediators (p -values < 0.05). These results highlight that Influencer Marketing achieves success not only by directly prompting consumer action but also by effectively enhancing perceived worth and strategically managing price-related perceptions in the customer's mind.

DISCUSSION

The Influence of Influencer Marketing on Purchase Decision

Based on the direct effect statistical calculation, the original sample value is 0.411 with a t-statistic of 6.678 (greater than 1.96) and a p-value of 0.000. These empirical findings indicate that for Generation Z, influencers are not just seen as promoters, but as trusted peers. Because of this close relationship, young consumers do not feel like they are watching a traditional advertisement. Instead, honest recommendations from influencers act as a mental shortcut that makes consumers feel safe to buy immediately. This perfectly matches the fast-paced shopping habits of modern digital buyers, validating previous studies by (Rohmawati & Ahmadi, 2025) and (Maharani et al., 2025) which state that influencer content can swiftly transform a consumer's interest into an active purchase.

The Influence of Influencer Marketing on Perceived Value

This hypothesis is accepted with an original sample value of 0.850, a t-statistic of 34.368, and a p-value of 0.000. This highly significant relationship proves that influencers solve a major problem in online shopping: the inability of consumers to try products directly. By providing honest reviews and showing real results, influencers give consumers a clear picture of the product's benefits. This process successfully replaces the need for physical testing, making the product feel much more valuable and reliable in the eyes of Generation Z. These results corroborate the findings of (Kumalasari & Noor, 2025) and (Kusumawati & Hasan, 2025), highlighting the powerful capacity of digital creators to maximize the perceived worth of a product.

The Influence of Influencer Marketing on Price Sensitivity

This path yielded an original sample value of 0.851, a t-statistic of 32.368, and a p-value of 0.000. From a consumer psychology perspective, this shows that a trusted influencer can effectively reduce consumers' fear of wasting money. Usually, consumers are sensitive to prices

because they are afraid of making a bad purchase. However, when a credible influencer justifies a product's quality, consumers stop focusing only on how expensive it is. Instead, they start seeing the price as a fair and competitive investment for a good product. This justifies the findings of (Mayasari, 2025) and (Pratama, 2024), illustrating that credible digital endorsements neutralize the psychological barrier associated with pricing.

The Influence of *Perceived Value* on *Purchase Decision*

This measurement is significant with an original sample of 0.328, a t-statistic of 5.570, and a p-value of 0.000. This outcome confirms that Generation Z consumers are smart and calculative buyers. They will only make a purchase if they believe the benefits of the skincare product both in terms of actual quality and emotional satisfaction are greater than the money they spend. When consumers realize the product is truly worth the price, this realization becomes the strongest push for them to complete the transaction. This empirical evidence extends the conclusions of (Iwan et al., 2025) and (Hargowseno, 2021) by highlighting that high perceived value is the main driver of purchases among younger demographics.

The Influence of *Price Sensitivity* on *Purchase Decisions*

The analysis reveals a positive and significant impact, evidenced by an original sample value of 0.285, a t-statistic of 4.615, and a p-value of 0.000. This presents an interesting finding: while being sensitive to price usually stops people from buying, in this context, it actually encourages them. This happens because budget-conscious Generation Z consumers actively look for the best deals. When they find a product with a justified and competitive price, their sensitivity pushes them to secure the transaction quickly before missing out on a good opportunity. This nuanced dynamic supports the findings from the (Ulil Albab Institute, 2025) and (Mayasari, 2025).

The Influence of *Influencer Marketing* on *Purchase Decisions* is Mediated by *Perceived Value*

The specific indirect effect calculation obtained an original sample value of 0.279 with a t-statistic of 5.747 and a p-value of 0.000, confirming legitimate mediation. This finding proves that influencers do not just create impulsive buying; they also make consumers think deeply about the product's worth. Influencers successfully convince consumers about the quality and benefits of the product. Once consumers internally agree that the product is valuable, they decide to buy it. This aligns with (Dewi & Maradona, 2024), showing that perceived value is a necessary psychological filter between seeing an influencer's content and actually buying the product.

The influence of *Influencer Marketing* on *Purchase Decision* is mediated by *Price Sensitivity*

The indirect effect test confirms this mediation with an original sample value of 0.242, a t-statistic of 4.743, and a p-value of 0.000. This provides a significant contribution to existing literature by showing that influencers can successfully guide budget-conscious consumers to

make a purchase by managing their price concerns. Instead of seeing price as a barrier, influencers help consumers understand why the price is fair. By changing the consumer's mindset from "this is too expensive" to "this is worth the money," influencers smoothly connect their promotional content to the final purchase decision.

CONCLUSION

This study examines the impact of influencer marketing on Generation Z's purchasing behavior toward Somethinc products, highlighting the mediating roles of perceived value and price sensitivity. Empirical results indicate that influencer marketing exerts a significant and positive direct influence on purchasing decisions, demonstrating that convincing digital endorsements can motivate immediate transactions among young consumers. Furthermore, this study establishes that perceived value and price sensitivity act as crucial mediators linking influencer reach to final purchases. Purchasing behavior is not merely a reaction to direct promotions but the result of internal evaluations regarding product value and financial considerations, which are actively shaped by influencers. From a theoretical perspective, this research enriches the Source Credibility Model by demonstrating that an influencer's effectiveness heavily depends on internal cognitive channels. By clearly validating a product's practical benefits, influencers successfully reduce consumers' cost-related doubts. Consequently, brands targeting Generation Z must focus not only on expanding influencer reach but also on creating content that strategically manages price perceptions and builds a strong sense of value overall.

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