

Framing Cosmetic Purchase Decisions in the Digital Era: The Role of Influencer Storytelling and Consumer Reviews with Self-Brand Connection as a Moderating Variable

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Abstract: This study aims to analyze the influence of influencer storytelling and consumer reviews on cosmetic product purchase decisions, with self-brand connection as a moderating variable. The focus is on consumers of the De Scents Culture brand, within the context of digital marketing. The theoretical foundation includes the Theory of Planned Behavior, the Elaboration Likelihood Model, and the Self-Congruity Theory. A quantitative method using Partial Least Squares-Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) was employed. The findings reveal that both influencer storytelling and consumer reviews have a positive impact on purchase decisions. Moreover, self-brand connection strengthens the relationship between those variables and purchase decisions, highlighting the emotional role consumers play in shaping brand preference. These findings provide both theoretical and practical implications, especially in crafting effective digital marketing strategies for local cosmetic brands. The study highlights the significance of cultivating emotional connections between brands and consumers to foster loyalty and influence purchasing decisions.

Keywords: *Cosmetics; Influencer; Self-brand connection; Storytelling*

1. Introduction

The global cosmetics industry continues to show significant growth, with its market value projected to reach USD 473.21 billion by 2028, growing at an annual rate of 5.5% (Loboda & Lopaciuk, 2013). In Indonesia, the cosmetics industry has seen a 21.9% increase in the number of companies, rising from 913 in 2022 to 1,010 by mid-2023 (Ratmawati et al., 2024). This growth is driven by increasing public awareness of the importance of self-care and skin health, as well as the growing trend of using high-quality local products. Figure 1 is a chart of cosmetics sales in Indonesia:

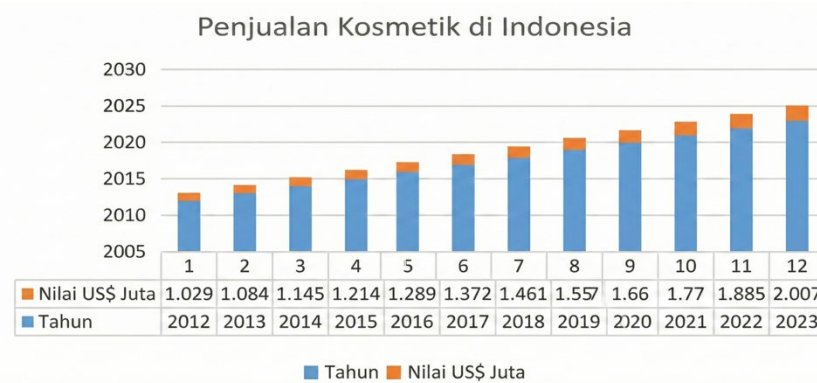


Figure 1. Cosmetic Sales in Indonesia
Source: risetcdn.jatimtimes.com

This shift aligns with changing consumer behavior, as people increasingly rely on social media to seek information and purchase beauty products. Platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube have become primary channels for consumers to explore and buy cosmetics. This phenomenon has created a new landscape where personal narratives from influencers and consumer reviews play a significant role in shaping purchase decisions.

Although digital marketing strategies have been widely adopted, few studies have specifically examined the influence of influencer storytelling and consumer reviews on purchase decisions, particularly considering the role of self-brand connection as a moderating variable. This study focuses on consumers of De Scent Culture products lip cream, cushion, and eau de perfume, to understand these dynamics within a local context.

Several previous studies have highlighted the importance of influencers and consumer reviews in influencing purchase decisions: (Talitha et al., 2025) found that 82% of respondents felt influenced by influencer recommendations on social media, and 78% of them made a purchase after viewing those reviews. (Putri & Fikriyah, 2023) showed that influencers and customer reviews have a positive and significant impact on impulsive purchases of halal cosmetic products on TikTok Shop. (Riska et al., 2023) identified that consumer reviews, product quality, and influencer marketing significantly influence purchase decisions for Erigo products. However, there remains a research gap in integrating influencer storytelling, consumer reviews, and self-brand connection as a moderating variable within a single study framework, particularly in the context of local cosmetic products such as De Scent Culture.

This study is supported by several relevant theories that explain consumer behavior in the context of digital marketing, particularly in the cosmetics industry. Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), according to (Ajzen, 1991), the Theory of Planned Behavior states that an individual's intention to perform a behavior is influenced by three main factors: attitude toward the behavior, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. In the context of

digital marketing, TPB is used to understand how consumer attitudes toward cosmetic products, social pressures from their environment (such as peers or social media), and their perceived ability to purchase the product can influence purchase decisions. Self-Congruity Theory, (Sirgy, 1986) proposed that the Self-Congruity Theory explains the tendency of consumers to choose brands whose image aligns with their self-concept. In this context, the self-brand connection becomes a crucial factor, as consumers tend to purchase cosmetic products that they feel reflect their personal identity or personality. Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM), introduced by (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986), the Elaboration Likelihood Model describes two main routes of persuasion: the central route and the peripheral route. In digital marketing, storytelling delivered by influencers can influence consumers through the peripheral route when consumers do not deeply process information but are still affected by the appeal of the messenger. On the other hand, detailed and informative consumer reviews can influence via the central route, where consumers engage in more rational and critical information processing. Social Influence Theory, social Influence Theory explains how the opinions, actions, or beliefs of others can influence individual behavior (Herbert C. Kelman, 1959). In the digital context, influencers act as authority figures or social role models, and their storytelling can create conformity and identification effects. Consumer reviews can also create normative pressure, encouraging others to follow the majority's choices. Parasocial Interaction Theory, introduced by (Godulla, 2022), this theory explains the one-sided relationships audiences feel with media figures, such as influencers. Consumers may feel an emotional closeness with influencers despite the lack of direct interaction. This perceived closeness can enhance the effectiveness of storytelling in influencing purchase decisions. Brand Attachment Theory, developed by (matthew thompson, 2008), this theory explains the emotional attachment consumers have toward a brand, consisting of three main components: affection, passion, and connection. This attachment can strengthen the self-brand connection, where consumers feel that the brand reflects their personal identity ultimately increasing the likelihood of repeat purchases and brand loyalty. Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT), developed by (KATZ et al., 1973), this theory states that individuals actively select media to fulfill specific needs, such as information, entertainment, or personal identity. In this context, consumers may seek product reviews or follow influencers to satisfy those needs, which in turn influences their purchase decisions.

The urgency and contribution of this study lie in understanding how influencer storytelling and consumer reviews influence purchase decisions, with consideration of self-brand connection. This understanding is crucial for cosmetic companies in designing effective marketing strategies. The study is expected to provide theoretical contributions to the field of digital marketing and practical insights for local cosmetic industry players in optimizing their marketing campaigns.

Research focus and objectives, this study aims to analyze: The influence of influencer storytelling on purchase decisions of De Scent Culture products. The influence of consumer reviews on purchase decisions of De Scent Culture products. The moderating role of self-brand connection in the relationship between influencer storytelling and consumer reviews with purchase decisions.

2. Research Method

2.1. Type and Approach of the Research

This study adopts a quantitative approach with a causal research design (KATZ et al., 1973). The purpose is to examine the influence of independent variables (storytelling by influencers and consumer reviews) on the dependent variable (purchase decision), with self-brand connection as a moderating variable, in the context of De Scent Culture cosmetic product consumers in the digital era.

2.2. Population and Sample

The population in this study consists of all consumers of De Scents Culture cosmetic products, who actively use social media and are exposed to influencer content and beauty product reviews.

2.3. Sampling Technique

The sampling technique employed in this study is purposive sampling, in accordance with Salmaa (2023). The selection process focused on consumers who are active on social media and have purchased specific De Scents Culture products, namely lip cream, cushion, or eau de parfum. Furthermore, eligible respondents were required to have prior exposure to both influencer content and consumer reviews on social media platforms

2.4. Sample Size Calculation

The sample size for an infinite population was calculated using Cochran's formula (R. Gunawan Sudarmanto, 2013), which is designed to estimate the minimum required sample size to achieve a desired level of precision with a specific confidence level and assumed proportion of the population. The Cochran formula for an infinite population is:

$$n = \frac{z^2 p(1-p)}{e^2}$$

Where:

- no = minimum sample size
- z = Z-score at 95% confidence level (1.96)
- p= assumed population proportion (50% or 0.5)
- q= margin of error (5% or 0.05)

By inserting the values:

$$no = \frac{(1,96)^2 \times 0,5 \times 0,5}{(0,05)^2}$$

$$no = \frac{3,8416 \times 0,25}{0,0025}$$

$$n0 = \frac{0,9604}{0,0025} = 384,16$$

Thus, the minimum number of respondents required for this study is rounded up to 385.

2.5. Data Collection Technique

Primary data was collected using an online questionnaire created via Google Forms (Widodo et al., 2023). The link was distributed digitally through beauty community groups, social media platforms such as Instagram and WhatsApp, and cosmetic product discussion forums. The questionnaire was designed using a 5-point Likert scale (Liu, 2025), ranging from 1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree. This study investigates the effect of influencer storytelling and consumer reviews on purchase decisions, with self-brand connection serving as a moderating variable. Below are the Google Form questionnaire items used in this study:

- Variable: Storytelling by Influencers (X1)
 - I was interested in buying the product after hearing the influencer's personal story about using De Scent Culture.
 - The influencer's story made me feel closer to the product.
 - The influencer's storytelling felt authentic and genuine.
 - The influencer's experience helped me understand the product's benefits.
 - I trusted the product more after hearing the influencer's story.
- Variable: Consumer Reviews (X2)
 - I read other consumers' reviews before deciding to purchase De Scent Culture products.
 - Consumer reviews provided the information I needed about product quality.

- I believe consumer reviews are more honest than advertisements.
- Positive reviews made me more confident about buying the product.
- The consistency of multiple similar reviews made me trust the product's authenticity.
- Variable: Self-Brand Connection (Z)
 - I feel the De Scent Culture brand reflects who I am.
 - I have a strong personal relationship with the De Scent Culture brand.
 - Using De Scents products makes me feel more confident.
 - I personally relate to the image of the De Scent Culture brand.
 - I feel emotionally connected to the De Scent Culture brand.
- Variable: Purchase Decision (Y)
 - I consciously and deliberately decided to buy De Scent Culture products.
 - I feel that buying De Scents was the right decision.
 - I seriously considered my decision before purchasing De Scent Culture.
 - I am satisfied with my decision to buy De Scents.
 - I am willing to repurchase De Scents Culture products in the future.

2.6. Data Analysis Technique

The collected data will be analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with the help of SmartPLS 4.0 software (Rahadi, 2023). The analysis steps include:

- Evaluation of the Outer Model (Hatta Setiabudhi, S.E et al., 2025):
 - Indicator validity (Outer Loading > 0.7)
 - Convergent validity (AVE > 0.5)
 - Reliability (Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability > 0.7)
- Evaluation of the Inner Model:
 - R-Square (R^2) and F-Square (F^2) values.
 - t-statistics and p-values (significance of influence), and moderation test using the interaction term (moderated regression).
- Discriminant Validity:
 - HTMT Ratio (Heterotrait-Monotrait) < 0.90

3. Results and Discussions

3.1 Interpretation of the Shopping Frequency Chart Results from the Google Form Questionnaire.

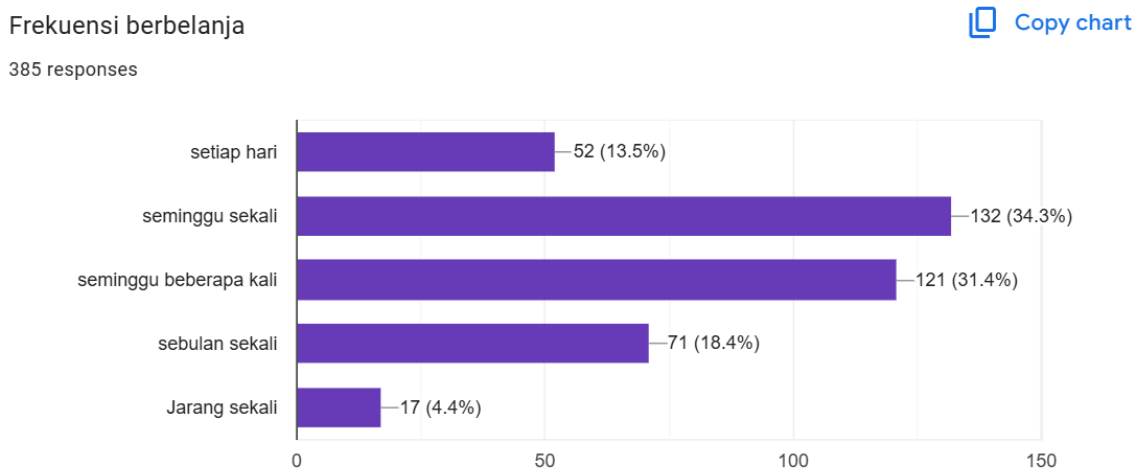


Figure 2. Diagram Shopping Frequency.

Source: Google Form Questioner

Based on the survey results from 385 respondents in the study titled *Framing Cosmetic Purchase Decisions in the Digital Era: The Role of Influencer Storytelling and Consumer Reviews with Self-Brand Connection as a Moderating Variable (A Study of De Scent Culture Consumers)* it was found that respondents' shopping frequency was dominated by those who shop once a week, totaling 132 people (34.3%), followed by those who shop several times a week, totaling 121 people (31.4%). Meanwhile, 71 respondents (18.4%) reported shopping once a month, 52 respondents (13.5%) indicated they shop every day, and only 17 respondents (4.4%) stated that they rarely shop. This finding indicates that the majority of De Scent Culture cosmetic consumers have active shopping habits, with over 65% of respondents purchasing cosmetics at least once a week. This suggests the presence of a responsive market potential for digital marketing strategies based on storytelling content and consumer reviews, especially when linked to the formation of an emotional connection between consumers and the brand (self-brand connection).

3.2. Outer Model Evaluation

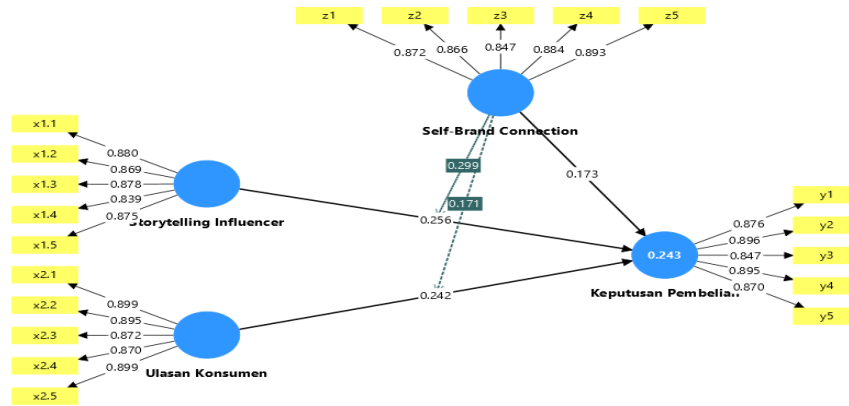


Figure 3. Diagram of Outer Model Evaluation Results.
Source: data processing Smart Pls.

Outer loadings - Matrix						
	Keputusan Pembelian	Self-Brand Connection	Storytelling Influencer	Ulasan Konsumen	Self-Brand Connection ...	Self-Brand Connection ...
x1.1			0.880			
x1.2			0.869			
x1.3			0.878			
x1.4			0.839			
x1.5			0.875			
x2.1				0.899		
x2.2				0.895		
x2.3				0.872		
x2.4				0.870		
x2.5				0.899		
y1	0.876					
y2	0.896					
y3	0.847					
y4	0.895					
y5	0.870					
z1		0.872				
z2		0.866				
z3		0.847				
z4		0.884				
z5		0.893				
Self-Brand Connection x Storytelling ...					1.000	
Self-Brand Connection x Ulasan Konsumen						1.000

Figure 4. Table of Outer Model Evaluation Results.
Source: data processing Smart Pls.

Based on the image displaying the Outer Loadings Matrix from the PLS (Partial Least Squares) analysis, the following is the interpretation of the outer loading test results:

- Purchase Decision (Y)
Indicators y1 to y5 have the following loadings: y1: 0.876, y2: 0.856, y3: 0.847, y4: 0.895, y5: 0.870 — all indicators are valid (above 0.70).
- Self-Brand Connection (Moderating Variable)
Indicators z1 to z5: z1: 0.872, z2: 0.866, z3: 0.847, z4: 0.884, z5: 0.893 all are valid and consistent.
- Storytelling Influencer (X1)
x1.1: 0.880, x1.2: 0.869, x1.3: 0.878, x1.4: 0.839, x1.5: 0.875 all indicators are strong and valid.

- Consumer Reviews (X2)
 - x2.1: 0.899, x2.2: 0.895, x2.3: 0.872, x2.4: 0.870, x2.5: 0.899 very strong, with high and consistent outer loadings.
- Moderation Interaction (Interaction between Self-Brand Connection and Storytelling Influencer, and Consumer Reviews)
 - Self-Brand Connection and Storytelling: 1.000
 - Self-Brand Connection and Consumer Reviews: 1.000

These are interaction variables (product/moderation results), and in SmartPLS, it is common to see loadings equal to 1, as they are formed from the product of two constructs. This is normal and indicates a perfectly formed interaction (thus, not interpreted in the same way as regular indicators). All indicators have outer loading values > 0.70 , meaning all are valid and reflect their respective constructs well. This model passes the convergent validity test, and therefore, further analysis can proceed, including reliability testing (Composite Reliability and AVE) and structural testing (path coefficient, R^2 , moderation, etc.).

Average variance extracted (AVE)	
	0.769
	0.762
	0.754
	0.787

Figure 5. Table of Average Variance Extracted Results.
Source: data processing Smart Pls.

The following is the interpretation of the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) test results as shown in the figure. All AVE values are above 0.70, which indicates excellent convergent validity. This means that each construct can explain more than 76% of the variance in its indicators and the model strongly satisfies the requirements for convergent validity.

Construct reliability and validity - Overview			
	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho_a)	Composite reliability (rho_c)
Keputusan Pembelian	0.926	0.943	0.943
Self-Brand Connection	0.923	0.947	0.941
Storytelling Influencer	0.919	0.933	0.939
Ulasan Konsumen	0.932	0.937	0.949

Figure 6. Table of Construct Reliability and validity Results.
Source: data processing Smart Pls.

The following is the interpretation of the Construct Reliability and Validity test results from the PLS-SEM output:

The analysis results indicate that all constructs in the model demonstrate excellent reliability levels. The Cronbach's Alpha values for all variables Purchase Decision, Self-Brand Connection, Storytelling Influencer, and Consumer Reviews are above 0.90. This indicates that each construct has very high internal consistency; in other words, the indicators within each construct consistently measure the same underlying concept.

The Composite Reliability values (both ρ_A and ρ_C) also exceed the threshold of 0.70, with most approaching or surpassing 0.94. This confirms that the constructs are highly reliable and well-suited for use within the model.

Overall, it can be concluded that all constructs in this model meet the criteria for internal reliability, both based on Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability. The model is robust in terms of construct measurement and is suitable for further analysis in the next stages, such as discriminant validity testing and the analysis of relationships among variables.

3.3 Evaluation Inner Model

R-square - Overview		
	R-square	R-square adjusted
Keputusan Pembelian	0.243	0.230

Figure 7. Table of R-square Results.
Source: data processing Smart Pls.

The following is the interpretation of the R-square (R^2) test results for the Purchase Decision variable:

An R-square value of 0.243 means that 24.3% of the variability in Purchase Decision can be explained by the independent variables in the model (namely, Storytelling Influencer, Consumer Reviews, and Self-Brand Connection as a moderating variable, if included). The

adjusted R-square value of 0.230 accounts for the number of predictors in the model to avoid overestimation. This value also consistently indicates that approximately 23% of the variation in Purchase Decision is explained by the model. An R^2 value of 0.243 is considered weak to moderate based on general PLS-SEM guidelines, they are 0,75 is substantial, 0.50 is moderate, and 0.25 is considering weak but still acceptable. Therefore, the model is still considered acceptable in terms of explanatory power.

f-square - Matrix	
	Keputusan Pembelian
Keputusan Pembelian	
Self-Brand Connection	0.039
Storytelling Influencer	0.086
Ulasan Konsumen	0.076
Self-Brand Connection x Storytelling ...	0.107
Self-Brand Connection x Ulasan Konsumen	0.033

Figure 8. Table of F-square Results.
Source: data processing Smart Pls.

Based on the f-square (f^2) test results in your model, the following is the interpretation related to the Purchase Decision variable, the f^2 values indicate the extent to which each variable contributes to explaining the variance in Purchase Decision within your model. The evaluation of effect sizes (f^2) provides insight into the substantive impact of each predictor on Purchase Decision. Among the variables, Storytelling Influencer demonstrated the highest contribution ($f^2 = 0.086$), followed closely by Consumer Reviews ($f^2 = 0.076$). Both variables fall within the small-to-moderate range, suggesting that external information sources serve as effective drivers in the purchasing process. In comparison, Self-Brand Connection yielded a smaller effect size ($f^2 = 0.039$). Although this impact is relatively modest according to standard thresholds, it remains a positive contributor to the model, indicating that the consumer's internal emotional bond plays a requisite, albeit secondary, role compared to external validation.

The interaction between Self-Brand Connection and Storytelling Influencer shows an f^2 value of 0.107, which is considered a moderate effect. This indicates that when consumers' personal connection with the brand aligns with influencer storytelling, the impact on purchase decisions becomes stronger.

Meanwhile, the interaction between Self-Brand Connection and Consumer Reviews has an f^2 value of 0.033, indicating a small effect. This suggests that although there is an influence from the combination of the two, it is not as strong as the interaction with influencer storytelling.

Overall, these results demonstrate that the combination of emotional factors (self-brand connection) and social influences (influencers or consumer reviews) can enhance purchase decisions particularly when both are aligned.

Discriminant validity - Heterotrait-monotrait ratio (HTMT) - Matrix

	Keputusan Pembelian	Self-Brand Connection	Storytelling Influencer	Ulasan Konsumen	Self-Brand Connection ...
Keputusan Pembelian					
Self-Brand Connection	0.202				
Storytelling Influencer	0.228	0.048			
Ulasan Konsumen	0.238	0.074	0.041		
Self-Brand Connection x Storytelling ...	0.275	0.019	0.090	0.024	
Self-Brand Connection x Ulasan Konsumen	0.152	0.053	0.027	0.086	0.000

Figure 9. Table of Discriminant Validity Results.

Source: data processing Smart PIs.

The results of the discriminant validity test using the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT), as shown in the figure, indicate that all HTMT values between constructs are below the recommended threshold of 0.90 (or 0.85 in some more conservative literature). The highest HTMT value in the table is only 0.275, which means there are no discriminant validity issues among the constructs in the model.

In other words, each variable in the research model Purchase Decision, Self-Brand Connection, Storytelling Influencer, Consumer Reviews, and the moderation interactions between Self-Brand Connection and the two variables is conceptually distinct and does not overlap with others. This strengthens the discriminant validity and indicates that each construct adequately measures a different concept. Therefore, the model passes the discriminant validity test based on the HTMT approach.

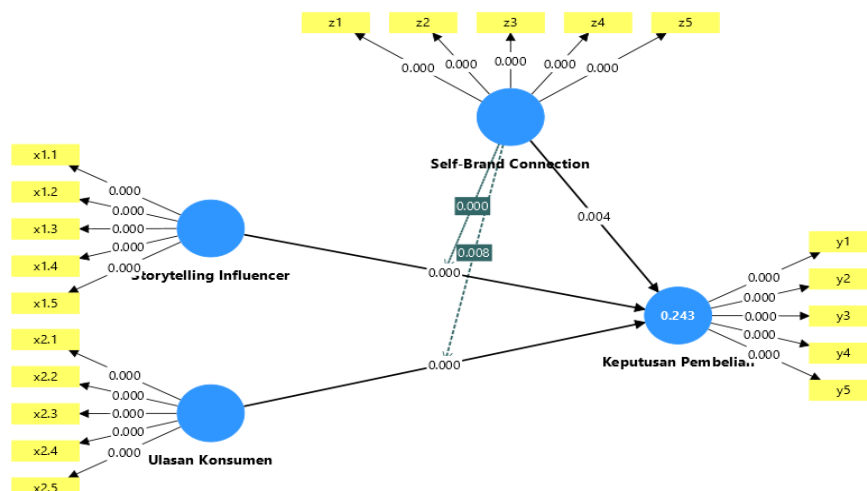


Figure 10. Diagram of Path Coefficients Results.

Source: data processing Smart PIs.

Path coefficients - Mean, STDEV, T values, p values					
	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (ST...	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values
Self-Brand Connection -> Keputusan ...	0.173	0.175	0.061	2.842	0.004
Self-Brand Connection x Storytelling ...	0.299	0.302	0.062	4.836	0.000
Self-Brand Connection x Ulasan Konsumen ...	0.171	0.176	0.065	2.640	0.008
Storytelling Influencer -> Keputusan ...	0.256	0.260	0.047	5.436	0.000
Ulasan Konsumen -> Keputusan Pembelian	0.242	0.243	0.045	5.348	0.000

Figure 11. Table of Path Coefficients Results.
Source: data processing Smart Pls.

The path coefficient analysis reveals that all proposed relationships significantly influence Purchase Decision ($p < 0.05$). regarding direct effects, Storytelling Influencer emerged as the strongest predictor ($O = 0.256$, $T = 5.436$), followed closely by Consumer Reviews ($O = 0.242$, $T = 5.348$) and Self-Brand Connection ($O = 0.173$, $T = 2.842$). This hierarchy underscores that while emotional bonds are essential, external information sources particularly influencer narratives to play a more pivotal role in shaping consumer decisions. Furthermore, the analysis of moderating variables substantiates that external factors significantly strengthen the impact of Self-Brand Connection. The interaction between Self-Brand Connection and Storytelling Influencer yielded the highest coefficient in the model ($O = 0.299$, $p < 0.001$), suggesting that influencer content acts as a powerful amplifier for consumers' emotional ties. Similarly, although slightly less impactful, the interaction with Consumer Reviews also proved positive and significant ($O = 0.171$, $p = 0.008$), confirming that peer validation enhances the link between brand connection and purchase behavior.

3.4 Discussion

The analysis results indicate that each variable in the model possesses unique characteristics and does not overlap with one another. This is reflected in the model's success in meeting discriminant validity criteria, signifying that constructs such as storytelling influencer, consumer reviews, self-brand connection, and purchase decision clearly and consistently measure distinct concepts. This provides a strong foundation for interpreting the relationships between variables with a high level of confidence.

This finding aligns with previous studies emphasizing the importance of influencers and consumer reviews in shaping purchase decisions. Research by (Talitha et al., 2025) shows that the majority of consumers respond positively to influencer recommendations on social media, with many being directly driven to purchase a product after reading other users' reviews. Similarly, studies by (Putri & Fikriyah, 2023) and (Riska et al., 2023) also found

that both influencer content and customer testimonials have a tangible impact on cosmetic product purchasing decisions.

However, this study contributes a more comprehensive perspective by introducing self-brand connection as a moderating variable. In this context, the emotional bond between consumers and the brand significantly strengthens the influence of information received from both influencers and consumer reviews on purchase intention and behavior. This enriches the theoretical understanding, particularly within the framework of the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991), which posits that attitudes, social norms, and perceived behavioral control shape intentions and actual behavior. Influencers play a role in shaping positive attitudes and perceptions, while reviews serve as a form of social norm that reinforces intention.

The findings also resonate with the Elaboration Likelihood Model (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986), which suggests that consumers can be influenced through two routes. Storytelling from influencers operates through the peripheral route, appealing to emotional and intuitive responses, whereas consumer reviews function through the central route by providing more detailed and rational information. When these two content types are combined with a consumer's emotional connection to the brand (self-brand connection), their influence on purchase decisions becomes significantly stronger.

Furthermore, Self-Congruity Theory (Sirgy, 1986) explains that consumers are more inclined toward brands that reflect their personal identity. In this context, self-brand connection becomes a key factor that bridges the content consumed and the decisions made. Consumers who feel that the De Scent Culture brand reflects who they are more easily influenced by stories and reviews that align with their personal values.

Therefore, this study not only confirms that digital content such as influencer storytelling and consumer reviews are effective in influencing purchase decisions but also underscores the importance of building a strong emotional bond between brand and consumer. This strategy is especially relevant for local cosmetic products like De Scent Culture which operate in a highly competitive digital marketing landscape.

4. Conclusion

This study demonstrates that influencer storytelling and consumer reviews are influential factors in shaping consumer purchase decisions for cosmetic products, particularly for the *De Scent Culture* brand. These two factors operate through both emotional and rational persuasion pathways, and their influence becomes even stronger when consumers possess a self-brand connection an emotional closeness and personal identification with the brand.

The test results indicate that all variables exhibit strong discriminant validity, meaning each construct stands independently and does not conceptually overlap with others. This confirms that the research model effectively explains the dynamics of purchase decision-making in a more comprehensive manner. These findings extend prior research and reinforce theoretical foundations such as the Theory of Planned Behavior, the Elaboration Likelihood Model, and the Self-Congruity Theory, all of which are relevant in explaining consumer behavior in the digital marketing era. The integrative approach used in this study represents a significant contribution by addressing a gap in the literature specifically, the limited number of studies that combine influencer storytelling, consumer reviews, and self-brand connection within a single conceptual framework, especially in the context of local Indonesian cosmetics.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, it is highly recommended that De Scent Culture prioritizes digital marketing strategies centered on authentic influencer storytelling. Since narratives reflecting everyday life resonate most deeply with the audience, the brand should curate content that fosters a genuine emotional bond. Concurrently, the management of consumer reviews warrants strategic reinforcement; actively encouraging and showcasing positive testimonials can serve as powerful social validation to enhance prospective buyers' trust. Furthermore, to solidify the Self-Brand Connection, branding campaigns should consistently align with the core values of young consumers, specifically focusing on themes of identity, self-expression, and empowerment.

For future academic endeavors, it is advisable to expand the current research model by incorporating additional variables such as trust in influencers, the intensity of social media interaction, or visual branding aesthetics. These additions would offer a more granular understanding of consumer behavior. Additionally, conducting a comparative study between local and international cosmetic brands could provide broader insights into the nuances of digital consumer preferences within the Indonesian market.

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