The Influence of Social Media Influencer Endorsement on Purchase Intention with the Mediating Roles of Parasocial Interaction and Possession Envy

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ARTICLE INFORMATION

ABSTRACT

This study investigates the impact of social media influencer endorsements on purchase intention while examining the mediating roles of parasocial interaction, possession envy, brand credibility, and brand attractiveness. The research employs surveys targeting social media users experienced in influencer endorsements who regularly purchase influencer-recommended products or services. The sample includes diverse respondents across age groups and demographics. SEM-PLS with SmartPLS software is utilized for data analysis. Findings reveal that social media influencer endorsements significantly enhance purchase intention. Parasocial interaction is identified as a mediator in the relationship between influencer endorsements and purchase intention. However, possession envy does not serve as a mediator for social media interactions' influence on purchase intention. In essence, perceived interactions with influencers and feelings of possession envy play pivotal roles in explaining the link between influencer endorsements and purchase intention. Additionally, brand attractiveness and brand credibility act as intermediaries in the impact of social media interactions on purchase intention. This study contributes valuable insights into the dynamics of influencer marketing and its effects on consumer behavior.

Keywords: Brand Credibility; Parasocial Interaction; Possession Envy; Purchase Intention; Social Media Influencer

INTRODUCTION

In the digital era, various human processes and activities are being transformed digitally, including business processes, utilizing technological innovations to optimize value without limitations of time and space. Information and Communication Technology (ICT), continuously developed and procured as per the guidance of the President of the Republic of Indonesia, Mr. Joko Widodo, plays a crucial role in improving the quality of life for the Indonesian people. Indonesia had around 204.7 million internet users in February 2022, which accounts for approximately 74.7% of the total population (Kemp, 2022). Business, particularly in the digital age, is significantly influenced by digitalization, incorporating the Internet of Things (IoT) and services into existing processes to add value through data analysis and management techniques. Notable technological innovations, such as social media, financial technology, and e-commerce, have disrupted traditional business models. Digital marketing has become vital, with social media marketing being particularly effective.

One aspect of business transformation is in marketing, where traditional marketing methods are gradually being replaced by digital marketing. Marketers now leverage online channels to reach and engage consumers, expanding their reach beyond traditional print and electronic advertising (Yuliastuti et al., 2024). Digital marketing involves promoting and selling products and services using online marketing strategies that leverage digital media, such as social media, search engine marketing, and email marketing. In this competitive digital market, companies must effectively utilize technology and innovations to create the right strategies for product sales and market share retention. One such strategy involves advertising on social media platforms, which are deemed effective communication channels. Social media usage in Indonesia has seen a significant increase, with approximately 191.4 million users as of February 2022 (Nurhayati-Wolff, 2024). This demonstrates the population's strong familiarity and proficiency in using social media. Its popularity highlights its effectiveness as a platform for digital marketers to connect with their target audience (Safitri & Sultan, 2024). Among the various social media platforms, Facebook and Instagram are the most widely used (Statcounter, 2024).

Digital marketing strategies often involve collaborations with social media influencers. Social media influencers are individuals with large followings on social media platforms who consistently engage with their audience and can shape trends. The global influencer marketing market has grown substantially more than tripled since 2019. The market is estimated to reach 24 billion USD in 2024. In the United States, influencer marketing spending reached an all-time high of 3.7 billion USD in 2021. The growth underscores the increasing importance of influencer collaborations for brand visibility, engagement, and purchasing decisions. Popular platforms for influencer marketing include Instagram and TikTok, with a significant rise in the number of influencers on these platforms (Dencheva, 2024). This data demonstrates the significant impact that influencers have on digital advertising.

Compared to traditional celebrities, influencers are considered more authentic and have a more significant impact on consumer decisions. A social media influencer is a key opinion leader (KOL) for their audience or fans on social media. They communicate within a large social network consisting of a collection of social media users who follow their accounts or pages with consistent sharing habits so that they can form and spread trends in the future.

Many customers depend on endorsements from influencers they follow on social media platforms (Kwiatek et al., 2021). This demonstrates the practicality of influencers, who can serve as valuable sources of information for individuals when making decisions. Previous research on endorsements made by influencers on social media shows that parasocial interactions completely mediate the relationship between interactions that occur on social media and celebrity attachment. A study has demonstrated that the attractiveness of celebrities, consumers' attitude toward advertisements, and their attitudes toward a brand have a substantial and favorable impact on their intention to purchase (Arora et al., 2019). Consumers are more likely to appreciate or recommend brands that have been recommended by influencers they like (Chetioui et al., 2020; Es-Safi & Sağlam, 2021). These previous studies show that influencers can encourage the emergence of purchase intention through parasocial interaction and other factors.

There are several things that can influence the creation of consumer buying intention (purchase intention) through social media influencer (SMI) endorsements, namely the interactions and attachments that occur between social media influencers and their audiences or followers, as well as the attractiveness and credibility of the endorsed brand. Interactions that occur on social media can give rise to parasocial interactions which will help support audience attachment with social media influencers. Therefore, it is not surprising that social media influencers impact consumers' decision-making processes (Chan, 2022). Social media influencers can captivate individuals and generate interest in purchasing a product (Rahayu & Sudarmiatin, 2022). Thus, it can be stated that social media influencers have the power to encourage consumer buying interest to buy a product.

Consumer demand for traditional herbal medicines is still relatively low. This occurs because of the perception held by certain individuals that the consumption of traditional herbal medicine is only intended for individuals who are unhealthy. In addition, the scarcity of needed herbs can also cause this phenomenon. Usually, conditions like this often occur in urban areas (Sugiarto et al., 2022). Therefore, in light of the limited public interest in using herbal medicines, as indicated by the persistently low consumer demand, it is imperative to study this matter. One option is studying social media influencers' influence on customer purchase interest, as supported by research studies (Es-Safi & Sağlam, 2021; Mokodompit et al., 2023). Therefore, this study builds upon earlier research to establish its foundation.

This research addresses a research gap in the context of Indonesia and the herbal product market, which has limited existing studies. There has been no related research carried out on social media influencers with social media users in Indonesia as research targets at a time when the influencer endorsement phenomenon is high. Additionally, no prior research has examined the specific influence of social media interaction, social media influencers, parasocial interaction, possession envy, brand attractiveness, and brand credibility on purchase intention for Herbal products.

The research objectives are as follows: (1) To determine the direct impact of social media interaction on social media influencer attachment; (2) To examine the mediating role of parasocial interaction between social media interaction and purchase intention, as well as possession envy's mediating role between parasocial interaction and purchase intention; (3) To investigate the direct influence of social media influencer attachment on purchase intention; and (4) To assess the mediating roles of brand attractiveness and brand credibility between social media influencer attachment and purchase intention.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Social Media Interaction and Parasocial Interactions
In a marketing context, social media facilitates collaboration between marketers and customers, allowing for prompt responses and engagement. Marketers adjust digital marketing strategies to attract customers' attention and preferences through social media.

Parasocial interactions are unidirectional relationships that individuals form with mediated personas, including celebrities (Horton & Wohl, 1956). Although one-sided, these relationships can feel as real and intense as face-to-face interpersonal relationships that include elements of friendship (Chung & Cho, 2017). Social media's increased interaction has amplified the inclination to establish connections with companies and celebrities, facilitating effective and efficient direct contact through regular updates on daily life (Labrecque, 2014). Consumers frequently form profound psychological bonds with celebrities, even though they have no actual acquaintance. Repeated exposure to celebrities, particularly those who employ intimate conversational styles, nurtures emotions of closeness (Chung & Cho, 2017). Therefore, customers frequently regard celebrities as friends, longing for intimacy despite the absence of genuine links. Accordingly, celebrities and influencers who combine promotional content with personal activities enhance the feeling of closeness and familiarity (Wood & Burkhalter, 2014). A study found a favorable correlation between the use of social networking and parasocial interactions (Su et al., 2021). Thus, the proposed hypothesis is as follows:

H1: Social media interaction has a positive effect on parasocial interactions.

Social Media Influencer Attachment
The flexibility in social media interaction extends to connecting with public figures, including celebrities and social media influencers. Social media influencers are opinion leaders who shape public opinion through digital content creation shared across various platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, Twitter, and Facebook. Social media influencers endorse products and services to increase brand awareness and gain followers. Attachment between influencers and their followers influences followers' behaviors and loyalty.

Parasocial interactions are comparable to genuine social interaction (Perse & Rubin, 1989). Parasocial interaction can create intimacy even though no real social interaction occurs, considering that the interaction that occurs in parasocial interaction is only one way. The feelings of familiarity and emotional attachment that arise can lead to attachment with social media influencers (Thomson, 2006). In other words, parasocial interactions will ultimately form bonds and a sense of connection with consumers' favorite social media influencers.

H2: Parasocial interactions have a positive effect on social media influencer attachment.

A study suggests that engaging with social media content favors followers' emotional connection to social media influencers, leading to improved attitudes and intentions towards them (Taillon et al., 2020). Social media allows consumers to follow, like, comment, and share with their favorite celebrities. Likewise, celebrities, or in this case, SMI can engage in conversations with many fans and followers effectively.

H3: Social media interaction has a positive effect on social media influencer attachment.

Previous research suggests that women have parasocial interactions to express their desire to resemble the celebrities they idolize (Greenwood & Long, 2011; Sokolova & Kefi, 2020). Therefore, recommendations or endorsements from celebrities can encourage consumers' likelihood to choose the endorsed brand (Kahle & Homer, 1985). Thus, attachment to social media influencers may make consumers idolize and imitate them and subsequently influence consumer consumption behavior (Ilicic & Webster, 2011; Ki et al., 2022).

H4: Social media influencer attachment has a positive effect on purchase intention.

Brand Attractiveness
Brand attractiveness is the appeal of a brand to consumers, often based on positive evaluations and experiences. It motivates consumers to seek more information about the brand, which can strengthen brand loyalty. When consumers like and continuously follow celebrities, they will have a positive attitude and emotional attachment to the celebrity or in this case the SMI they follow and will ultimately respond positively to all products and brands promoted by the SMI (Ilicic & Webster, 2011).

H5: Social media influencer attachment has a positive effect on brand attractiveness.

Brand Credibility
Brand credibility is closely related to the brand image and perception in the eyes of consumers, including trustworthiness, expertise, and attractiveness (Erdem & Swait, 2004; Sternthal & Craig, 1982). Social media influencers are expected to transfer various brand identity factors, such as credibility, personality, and values through endorsements. A study stated that endorser credibility has a positive effect on brand credibility (Chung & Cho, 2017). Strong attachment to celebrities leads to the transfer of value to the brand in terms of trust (Hung et al., 2011).

H6: Social media influencer attachment has a positive effect on brand credibility.

Possession Envy
Possession envy is the desire to own what celebrities or influencers use. It stems from a sense of envy, a painful feeling when others possess better things, and it can manifest as the desire to own the same items. Through a person's parasocial interaction with the influencer they idolize, there is an expression of their desire to resemble the celebrity they idolize (Greenwood & Long, 2011; Sokolova & Kefi, 2020). This desire to be like this often leads to feelings of envy and the desire to own the products used by their idols (Jin & Ryu, 2020). Envy, which leads to the desire to own, has a positive relationship effect on consumer purchase intentions (Oflazoğlu & Aydın, 2016). In the context of social media influencer-based marketing, selfies, and glamorous photos can cause jealousy and in turn increase consumer purchasing intentions (Lin et al., 2021; Milovic, 2014).

H7: Parasocial interactions have a positive effect on possession envy.
H8: Possession envy has a positive effect on purchase intention.
H9: Parasocial interaction mediates the influence of social media interaction on social media influencer attachment.
H10: Brand credibility mediates the relationship between social media influencer attachment and purchase intention.
H11: Possession envy as a mediator of the influence of parasocial interaction on purchase intention.

This study is a replication of research conducted by Aw and Labrecque (2020) which investigated the results of parasocial interactions with celebrities on social media. Their study investigates the dynamics of how individuals form parasocial relationships with celebrities in the context of social media and how these interactions influence their consumer behavior.

Another research that contributed to this research is Purwanto (2021), exploring the relationship between celebrity trust and parasocial interactions in forming consumer purchase intentions. This explains how trust and parasocial interactions with influencers, particularly on platforms like Instagram, influence consumers' intent to make a purchase.

Furthermore, Hasan and Sohail (2021) contributed valuable insights to the literature. This research aims to increase our understanding of the antecedents of social media marketing and their influence on purchase intentions. The report also examines the moderating impact of local and non-local brand perceptions on these relationships, offering a different perspective on the role of brands in the digital landscape.

Collectively, these previous research efforts provided the foundation for this study, guiding the exploration of how social media influencer endorsements, parasocial interactions, and envy of ownership interrelate to influence purchase intentions. The researchers use the Aw and Labrecque (2020) model applied to consumer social media users in Indonesia and mainly focus on herbal products.

The research model of this study can be seen in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Research Model
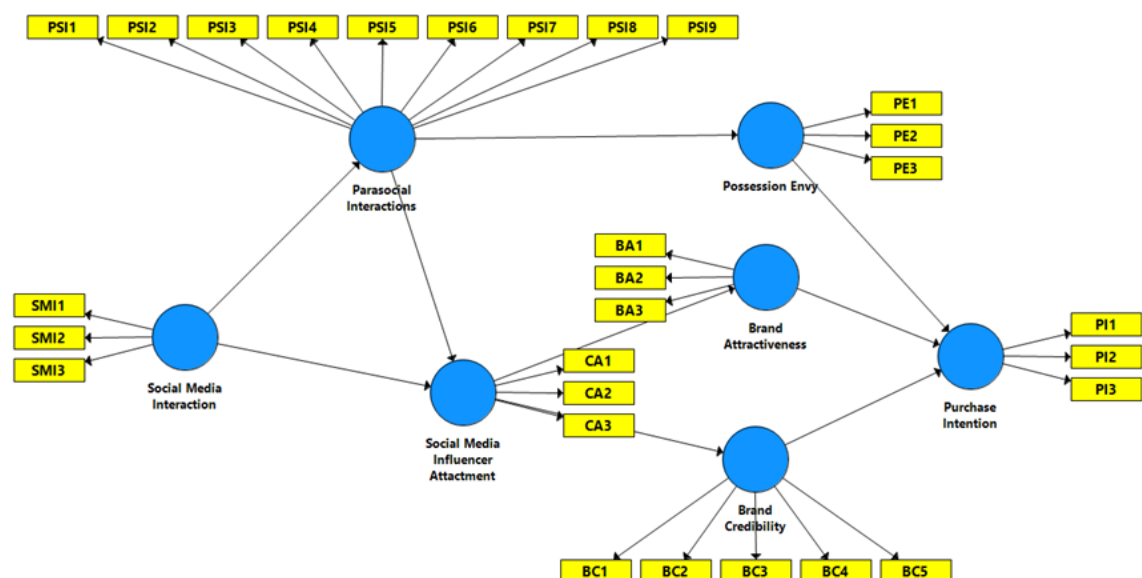
Source: Aw & Labrecque (2020)

RESEARCH METHOD

The research will be conducted in Indonesia, using survey method during the months of March to April 2023. The research will collect data from a population limited to consumers who follow MA's (influencer) Instagram account. The research object is limited to herbal products endorsed by the influencer. Herbal products are products aimed at helping

people achieve a healthy and balanced lifestyle more easily. This product was created based on the belief that healthy living should be simple and easy, but maintaining a healthy lifestyle in the modern era is often complicated due to exposure to chemicals and toxins that are harmful to health as well as confusing information about what is good for the body. Herbal products provide solutions by relying on natural wisdom (Herbana, 2023).

The sample will be selected using purposive sampling, a technique based on specific considerations. In this study, the criteria for sample selection include individuals of Generation Y and Z, both male and female, aged 18-40, who have viewed MA's Instagram Story about Women's Daily Herbal products. This age range aligns with the definition of early adulthood (18-40 years) and the productive age category (20-40 years) (Afandi et al., 2023; Yasin & Priyono, 2016). These age groups are characterized by high digital literacy and active engagement with social media for information seeking (Kezer et al., 2016). Hence, participants between the ages of 18 and 40 were selected for this study.

Based on guidelines, the minimum sample size calculation is as follows: (number of indicators) x (5 to 10 times). Consequently, the minimum sample size for this study is 29 x 10 = 290 respondents. The researcher will collect primary data directly through a Google Form survey. The data collection technique employed will be a survey, with the questionnaire distributed online via Google Forms. Respondents meeting the predefined criteria—male and female individuals aged 18-40 residing across Indonesia who are aware of MA's Instagram Story about Women's Daily Herbal products—will participate. The questionnaire will employ a Likert scale, comprising six scales: 1 = Strongly Disagree; 2 = Disagree; 3 = Somewhat Disagree; 4 = Somewhat Agree; 5 = Agree; and 6 = Strongly Agree. This robust methodology will enable an in-depth examination of the research objectives, exploring the interplay between social media influencer endorsement, parasocial interaction, possession envy, and purchase intention. The research questionnaire was adapted from Aw and Labrecque (2020).

The analytical technique employed in this research is Structural Equation Modeling using the Partial Least Square (SEM-PLS) algorithm. This study involves multiple exogenous variables, and the utilization of PLS-SEM is more suitable than CB-SEM because it can analyze more than one exogenous variable simultaneously (Hair et al., 2010). Data analysis began with the construction of the structural model, followed by the validation and reliability testing of the measurement model (outer model) and the assessment of the significance of relationships between variables (inner model).

RESULTS

The convergent validity value is used to determine the validity of a construct. The indicator is said to be valid if the factor loading value is above 0.5 (original sample value). Based on the data presented in Table 1, it is known that each research variable indicator has an outer loading value of > 0.5. Meanwhile, the 2 possession envy indicators with a value of less than 0.5 were not used in hypothesis testing.

Table 1. Convergent Validity

Variable	Indicator	Outer loading
Brand attractiveness	BA1	0.870
	BA2	0.912
	BA3	0.870
Brand Credibility	BC1	0.793

	BC2	0.906
	BC3	0.911
	BC4	0.872
	BC5	0.804
Social Media Influencer Attachment	SMIA1	0.826
	SMIA2	0.929
	SMIA3	0.916
Possession Envy	PE1	0.995
Purchase intention	PI1	0.896
	PI2	0.807
	PI3	0.916
Parasocial Interactions	PSI1	0.735
	PSI2	0.724
	PSI3	0.777
	PSI4	0.734
	PSI5	0.717
	PSI6	0.650
	PSI7	0.736
	PSI8	0.684
	PSI9	0.673
Social Media Interaction	SMI1	0.627
	SMI2	0.861
	SMI3	0.895

To assess reliability, the Cronbach's Alpha value is examined, and it is considered reliable when the Cronbach's Alpha value is above the standard value of 0.6. Table 2 shows that the latent variable has a composite reliability value above 0.7. This means that the indicators that have been determined are able to measure each latent variable (construct) well, or in other words, based on the composite reliability values that have been obtained, it shows that the measurement model is reliable. The square root value of AVE for each construct variable is greater than the correlation value so that the construct in this research model can still be said to have good discriminant validity.

Table 2. Several Criteria for the Outer Model and Inner Model

	Outer Model			Inner Model	
	AVE	Composite Reliability	Cronbach's Alpha	R^2	F^2
Brand attractiveness	0.884	0.915	0.861	0.180	0.061
Brand Credibility	0.859	0.933	0.910	0.201	0.291
Parasocial Interactions	0.715	0.904	0.880	0.291	0.302
Possession Envy	0.683	0.693	0.750	0.054	0.003
Purchase intention	0.873	0.906	0.843	0.558	0.252
Social Media Influencer Attachment	0.890	0.919	0.868	0.381	0.411
Social Media Interaction	0.803	0.842	0.710	0.281	0.220

To validate the overall structural model's performance, which includes validating the combined performance of the measurement model (outer model) and the structural model (inner model), a Goodness of Fit (GoF) test is conducted. In the d_ULS model, the value is 2.237 or > 2.00 and d_G is 0.983 or > 0.90, thus indicating a fit model. RMS

Theta Root Mean Square Residual Covariance < 0.102, while the RMS Theta model value is 0.162 or > 0.102, so the model is classified as a moderate fit. SRMR is <0.08, less than 0.1 or 0.08, it is considered suitable or can be used to avoid model specification errors (see Table 3).

Table 3. Model Fit Test

	Saturated Model	Estimated Model
SRMR	0.072	0.146
d_ULS	2.237	9.324
d_G	0.983	1.208
Chi-Square	1180.781	1347.016
NFI	0.736	0.699
RMS Theta	0.162	

After testing both the outer and inner models, which have met the assumptions in SEM analysis, hypothesis testing was conducted. The hypothesis testing in this study was performed with the assistance of SmartPLS (Partial Least Square) 3.0 software. The values can be observed from the results of bootstrapping. The model's results can be visualized as shown in the following Table 4.

Table 4. Research Hypothesis

Hypothesis		Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	P Value
1.	Social Media Interaction → Parasocial Interactions	0.540	0.541	0.054	10.028	0.000
2.	Parasocial Interaction → Social Media Influencer Attachment	0.513	0.517	0.057	8.999	0.000
3.	Social Media Interaction → Social Media Influencer Attachment	0.163	0.163	0.068	2.382	0.018
4.	Social Media Interaction → Parasocial Interaction → Social Media Influencer Attachment	0.277	0.280	0.045	6.211	0.000
5.	Social Media Influencer Attachment → Purchase Intention	0.158	0.153	0.071	2.242	0.025
6.	Social Media Influencer Attachment → Brand Credibility	0.448	0.448	0.056	8.050	0.000
7.	Brand Credibility → Purchase Intention	0.490	0.491	0.067	7.359	0.000
8.	Social Media Influencer Attachment → Brand Credibility → Purchase Intention	0.220	0.221	0.041	5.299	0.000
9.	Social Media Influencer Attachment → Brand Attractiveness	0.425	0.424	0.060	7.088	0.000

10.	Brand Attractiveness → Purchase Intention	0.219	0.220	0.072	3.029	0.003
11.	Social Media Influencer Attachment → Brand Attractiveness → Purchase Intention	0.093	0.093	0.033	2.825	0.005
12.	Parasocial Interaction → Possession Envy	0.232	0.226	0.118	1.971	0.049
13.	Possession Envy → Purchase Intention	0.021	0.024	0.047	0.447	0.655
14.	Parasocial Interaction → Possession Envy → Purchase Intention	0.005	0.006	0.012	0.408	0.684

The results of the hypothesis (Table 4) indicate a positive influence between the variables of social media interaction and parasocial interaction. In other words, the higher the level of user interaction with social media, the greater the level of interaction formed with celebrities or public figures on social media. The findings support Hypothesis 1, as evidenced by a p-value of 0.000, which is less than 0.05, and a t-statistic value of 10.028, exceeding 1.96.

The results of hypothesis 2 indicate a positive influence between the variables parasocial interaction and social media influencer attachment. This implies that the higher the level of parasocial interaction with celebrities on social media, the stronger the respondents' sense of attachment to these celebrities. The analysis results confirm the acceptance of Hypothesis 2, as it has a p-value of 0.000, which is less than 0.05, and a t-statistic value of 8.999, which exceeds 1.96.

The obtained results support Hypothesis 3, indicating a positive and direct influence of social media interaction on social media influencer attachment. Descriptively, the respondents' feedback showed a 92.89% agreement with the concept of social media interaction. This finding highlights a positive relationship between social media interaction and social media influencer attachment.

Hypothesis 4 suggests a positive relationship between the variables "social media influencer attachment" and "purchase intention." This implies that the higher the level of attachment respondents have to celebrities on social media, the greater their intention to make purchases. Hypothesis 4 is accepted based on a p-value of 0.025, which is less than 0.05, and a t-statistic value of 2.242, exceeding 1.96.

The analysis results indicate a positive influence between the variables of social media influencer attachment and brand attractiveness. This implies that the higher the level of attachment respondents have toward celebrities on social media, the more attractive the brand advertised by these celebrities becomes. Hypothesis 5 is accepted as it has a p-value of 0.000, which is less than 0.05, and a t-statistic value of 7.088.

Hypothesis 6 suggests a positive relationship between the variables "social media influencer attachment" and "brand credibility" This implies that the higher the level of attachment respondents have to celebrities on social media, the greater their intention to make purchases. Hypothesis 6 is accepted based on a p-value of 0.000.

The analysis results indicate a positive influence between the variables parasocial interaction and possession envy (ownership overlap). This means that the higher the

level of parasocial interaction with celebrities on social media, the greater the overlap in ownership perceived by respondents regarding the items owned by those celebrities. Hypothesis 7 is accepted because it has a p-value of 0.049, which is less than 0.05, and a t-statistic value for H12 of 1.971, which is greater than 1.96.

The analysis results indicate that hypothesis 8 is rejected due to having a p-value of 0.655, which is greater than 0.05, and a t-statistic value of 0.447, which is less than 1.96. This implies that there is no significant positive influence between the possession envy variable and purchase intention.

The analysis results indicate that the variable "parasocial interaction" acts as a mediator, bridging the influence between "social media interaction" and "social media influencer attachment." In this context, parasocial interaction with celebrities on social media aids in mediating the formation of attachment to these celebrities through user interactions on social media. Hypothesis 9 is accepted because it possesses a p-value of 0.000, which is less than 0.05, and a t-statistic value of 6.211, exceeding 1.96.

The research analysis reveals that the variable "brand credibility" acts as a mediator or intermediary in the relationship between "social media influencer attachment" and "purchase intention." This implies that respondents' level of trust in a brand helps mediate the connection between their attachment to social media influencers and their intention to purchase products from that brand. Hypothesis 10 is accepted because it has a p-value of 0.000, which is less than 0.05, and a t-statistic value of 5.299, which is greater than 1.96.

The analysis results indicate that Hypothesis 11 is rejected, with a p-value of 0.684, which is greater than 0.05, and a t-statistic value of 0.408, which is less than 1.96. This suggests that possession envy does not mediate the influence of parasocial interaction on purchase intention. The finding implies that there is a direct impact of parasocial interaction on purchase intention, independent of possession envy.

DISCUSSION

This study highlights the significant influence of social media interactions and parasocial interaction on purchasing intention. As proven by previous research, greater engagement on social media leads to increasing levels of parasocial contact (Nur'afifah et al., 2020), which in turn strengthens the bond with social media influencers (Yuan & Lou, 2020). This supports prior research that suggests parasocial interactions have a role in connecting social media interaction and social media influencer attachment (Aw & Labrecque, 2020). These findings indicate that actively participating on social media platforms is essential for cultivating robust emotional connections with influencers.

Furthermore, the findings shows that social media influencers attachment has a significant impact on the intention to make purchases (Abdullah et al., 2020). It supports previous research that emphasized the direct role of influencer attachment on customer purchase behavior (Ilicic & Webster, 2011; Ki et al., 2022). Parasocial interactions foster emotional and cognitive connections, which in turn cultivate trust and loyalty towards influencers. Consequently, this enhances consumers' inclination to follow the influencers' recommendations and ultimately leads to an increase in their intention to make purchases (Chung & Cho, 2017). These observations underscore the need to foster genuine relationships between influencers and their audience.

Brand attractiveness and brand legitimacy are crucial factors that determine the connection between influencer attachment and purchase intention. This analysis confirms the findings of Erdem and Swait (2004) that influencer endorsements increase the trustworthiness of a business, leading to a positive effect on purchase intentions. The mediating role of brand credibility indicates that trust in the brand, as conveyed by the influencer, is essential for translating influencer attachment into tangible purchasing behavior (Kareem & Venugopal, 2023). This underscores the imperative for firms to engage in partnerships with reputable influencers in order to enhance their market visibility.

Notably, whereas parasocial interaction has a significant impact on possession envy, possession envy does not operate as a mediator in the relationship between parasocial interaction and purchase intention. This discovery contradicts prior research conducted by Purwanto (2021). It indicates that, when it comes to herbal items, the inclination to acquire what influencers possess may not significantly influence the intention to make a purchase. However, the emotional bond and perceived trustworthiness of the influencer have a more significant impact. This emphasizes the necessity for marketers to prioritize the establishment of trust and emotional connection rather than solely exploiting feelings of jealousy.

The findings have substantial implications for marketers. Companies should prioritize the cultivation of positive engagements on social media through effective promotional strategies and the construction of parasocial solid connections with clients. The influence of promotion on the intention to purchase is significant (Singh et al., 2023). Therefore, it is imperative to promote items on social media meticulously. This method not only strengthens the emotional connection between consumers and influencers but also promotes the legitimacy and appeal of the brand, thus increasing the likelihood of making a purchase.

CONCLUSION

This research uncovers significant insights into the dynamics of social media influencer endorsement and its impact on purchase intention. Firstly, it establishes that active social media interactions foster strong emotional and cognitive bonds between users and influencers, resulting in heightened user satisfaction and affiliation with these influencers. Parasocial interactions, attachment to influencers, and brand awareness are found to mediate the relationship between social media interactions and purchase intention, underlining the importance of these factors in driving purchase decisions through social media.

Secondly, the study reveals that possession envy, or feelings of envy towards items owned by influencers, does not mediate the influence of parasocial interactions on purchase intention. This suggests that marketing strategies should prioritize building positive attachments and enhancing consumer trust in the brand, as they prove more effective in stimulating purchase intent.

Lastly, attachment to social media influencers emerges as a key driver of purchase intent. Parasocial interactions play a pivotal role in shaping consumer purchasing decisions, with consumers more inclined to buy products or services when they feel connected and engaged through such interactions. In summary, this research underscores the substantial role of social media influencers in influencing consumer behavior via social media interactions, emphasizing the effectiveness of parasocial

interactions in enhancing purchase intent and driving consumer decisions to favor brands endorsed by influencers.

For further research, researchers can consider adding other relevant variables, such as trust or brand loyalty. This will provide a more comprehensive understanding of the influence of social media influencer endorsements on purchase intention. Choose a representative and relevant sample, such as active social media users who have a habit of purchasing products or services recommended by influencers. In addition, consider limiting target respondents to certain age groups or demographics who tend to use social media as a source of information and purchasing influence. Consider the possible influence of moderating variables, such as type of product or service, intensity of social media use, or level of consumer engagement, which may modify the relationship between the variables under study.

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DECLARATION OF CONFLICTING INTERESTS
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