

THE INFLUENCE OF INFLUENCERS ON YOUTUBE SOCIAL MEDIA ON GADGET PURCHASE DECISIONS OF ECONOMIC EDUCATION STUDENTS AT SRIWIJAYA UNIVERSITY

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the influence of influencers on YouTube social media on gadget purchasing decisions among students of Economics Education at Sriwijaya University. The method used is quantitative associative with data collection techniques through questionnaires, interviews, and documentation on a sample of 77 students. The research findings revealed that influencer marketing has a significant and positive influence, with a contribution of 73.42%. Further analysis shows that influencer credibility, particularly the ability to present specific and transparent product explanations, is a key factor with a very strong percentage (83%). Meanwhile, student purchasing decisions are dominated by rational considerations, where product characteristics (89%) and reviews from other consumers (88%) are the main determining factors, overcoming the influence of mere popularity or trends. Thus, influencer marketing strategies on YouTube are proven effective in shaping purchasing decisions, especially when supported by informative, objective content that focuses on the product's utility.

Keywords: Purchasing Decision; *Digital Marketing*; *Influencer*; *Social Media*.

INTRODUCTION

Rapidly developing technological advances have brought about significant changes in various aspects of human life, including communication and marketing. Social media has become a key platform for product marketing due to its ability to reach a broad and interactive audience. Marketing communication strategies through social media are considered more effective than conventional media, given the high level of public usage of platforms such as YouTube, Instagram, and Facebook (Lola & Nainggolan, 2023). YouTube, as a digital video-based social media platform, occupies a crucial role in modern society. Through YouTube, users can upload, watch, and share various video content from around the world. This platform is used not only as a source of entertainment but also as a means of obtaining the latest information, watching product reviews, and seeking references before making a purchase (Samosir et al., 2019). In Indonesia, YouTube ranked third in terms of the number of active users in the world in 2023, reaching approximately 139 million users (Databoks, 2023). This development shows that digital technology, including YouTube, has become an integral part of people's lives across all age groups, both young and old (Herdiyani et al., 2022). According to the Indonesian Internet Service Providers Association (APJII, 2024), the number of internet users in Indonesia reached approximately 221.56 million out of a total population of 278.69 million, a 1.4% increase compared to the previous year. Technological devices such as *gadgets* are one of the factors supporting high internet penetration. Gadgets function as a means of communication, a source of information, and even a medium of entertainment that allows individuals to interact and access social media anytime and anywhere (Marpuang, 2018). In fact, social interactions are now often conducted online using devices such as



computers, laptops, tablets, and *smartphones* .

In the context of modern marketing, the development of social media also influences consumer behavior, including students, in making product purchasing decisions. One widely used strategy is *influencer marketing* , a form of promotion through individuals who have significant influence on social media (Herviani et al., 2020). Influencers on YouTube often play a significant role in shaping consumer perceptions and purchasing decisions, particularly in technology product categories such as gadgets. Through content in the form of *reviews* , *unboxings* , and specification comparisons, influencers provide in-depth and engaging information, thereby building trust and influencing audience purchasing interest (Sains dan Indonesia, 2022). Several previous studies have shown a significant influence between *influencer marketing* and consumer purchasing decisions. Research by Lola & Nainggolan (2023) found that *influencer marketing* had a positive and significant effect on *brand image* and purchasing decisions for Somethinc products in Surabaya. Similarly, research by Purwanto et al. (2023) proved that *social media influencers* had a significant influence on purchasing decisions for Scarlett Whitening products via YouTube among Undhari students from the 2019–2022 intake. However, most previous studies have focused more on *fashion* and *beauty products* and on social media such as Instagram and TikTok, rather than on YouTube or technology product categories. Based on this gap, this study focuses specifically on the influence of influencers on YouTube social media on gadget purchasing decisions, especially among students of Economics Education at Sriwijaya University as a digital generation who actively use technology. In addition, this study adds interview and documentation methods as support in data collection to obtain more comprehensive results. This research is important because the phenomenon of the rise of *influencer marketing* requires consumers, especially students, to think critically and rationally in determining purchasing decisions. Therefore, this study aims to analyze how much influence influencers on YouTube social media have on gadget purchasing decisions among students of Economics Education at Sriwijaya University. Therefore, the Problem Formulation Based on the background explained previously is "How Do Influencers on YouTube Social Media Influence on Gadget Purchasing Decisions of Students of Economics Education at Sriwijaya University?" and with the aim of the research to prove the influence of Influencers on YouTube Social Media Influence on Gadget Purchasing Decisions of Students of Economics Education at Sriwijaya University.

METHODS

This study uses a non-experimental quantitative approach with an associative method, which aims to prove the influence of influencers on YouTube social media on gadget purchasing decisions of students of Economics Education, Sriwijaya University. According to Sugiyono (2019:66), causal associative research is research that shows a cause and effect relationship between two or more variables. This study consists of two variables, namely the independent variable (X) namely *YouTube Social Media Influencers* , and the dependent variable (Y) namely *Purchase Decisions* . Data were obtained through a questionnaire compiled based on the indicators of each variable to determine the influence between the two. This study uses a non-probability sampling technique with a purposive sampling method, namely determining samples based on certain considerations (Sugiyono, 2023:133). The criteria set by the researcher were that

respondents were students of Economics Education, Sriwijaya University class of 2023 who used YouTube social media. From a total population of 95, 77 students were obtained as research samples.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

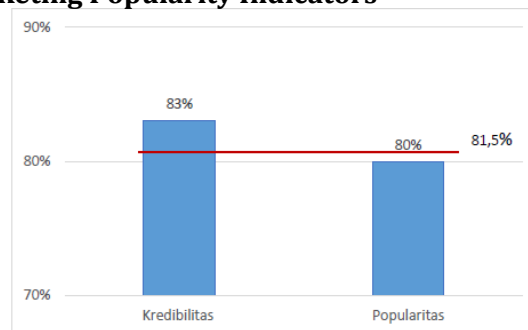
First , Description of Research Data

This research was conducted on active students of Economics Education at Sriwijaya University in the 2023 Academic Year with a population of 95 students, and was conducted on June 2–July 29, 2025. The sampling technique used was purposive sampling with the criteria of active students who use YouTube social media, resulting in 77 respondents based on the Slovin formula calculation. Data collection was carried out through questionnaires, interviews, and documentation. The questionnaire instrument was used to measure influencer marketing variables and purchasing decisions, distributed via Google Form via WhatsApp for more efficiency. The measurement scale used was a 4-point Likert Scale, namely *Strongly Agree (SS)* , *Agree (S)* , *Disagree (TS)* , and *Strongly Disagree (STS)* . Interview and documentation techniques were used as supporting data to strengthen the questionnaire results. Interviews were conducted online via Zoom on July 5, 2025 due to distance and time constraints. Meanwhile, documentation was used to support the *influencer marketing variable* on the credibility indicator, in the form of evidence of influencer accounts on YouTube social media that met the research criteria.

Second, Description of Influencer Marketing Questionnaire Data

This study used a questionnaire containing 28 statements to measure influencer marketing on YouTube social media based on two indicators: influencer credibility and popularity. Of the total statements, 21 were positive and 7 were negative. The assessment used a 4-point Likert scale, with a score of 4–1 for positive statements and the reverse (1–4) for negative statements. Based on Table 19, the average percentage of the influencer marketing credibility indicator reached 83%, categorized as very strong. The highest percentage was found in the influencer's ability to present and explain gadget products specifically, indicating that this expertise can influence viewers' views in choosing products. Students were more trusting of influencers who were honest and transparent in reviewing product advantages and disadvantages. Meanwhile, the lowest percentage, 69%, was found in the influencer reputation indicator, indicating that students considered the objectivity and quality of content delivery more than the influencer's popularity or reputation.

Third, Influencer Marketing Popularity Indicators



(Sumber : Data peneliti, diolah Agustus 2025)

Gambar 3 Persentase Indikator Influencer Marketing

Based on Table 20, the average percentage of influencer marketing popularity indicators reached 80%, categorized as strong. The highest percentage, at 88%, was found in the comments section, where viewers consider other users' opinions as additional validation before purchasing. Relevant content and discussions about the latest gadgets also increased viewer interest. Overall, these results indicate that student trust is built through active interaction and engagement with content and the audience community on YouTube.

Four, Customer Loyalty Questionnaire Results

Tabel 21 Kategorisasi Kecenderungan Angket *Influencer*

Kategori	Interval Skor	Frekuensi	Persentase
Tinggi	$84 \leq X$	59	76,6%
Sedang	$56 \leq X < 84$	18	23,4%
Rendah	$X < 56$	0	0%
Jumlah		77	100%

(Sumber : Data peneliti, diolah September 2025)

Based on Table 21 of the Influencer Questionnaire Tendency Categorization, it can be explained that of the total of 77 respondents, 59 respondents (76.6%) were in the high category, 18 respondents (23.4%) were in the medium category, and no respondents (0%) were in the low category. These results indicate that in general, the influence of influencers on social media YouTube on students of Economics Education, Sriwijaya University is at a high level. This means that the majority of students consider influencers to have a significant role in influencing their views and decisions, especially in terms of obtaining information and considering gadget purchases.

Influencer Marketing Interview Data Results

The interview technique used in this study was to supplement the questionnaire data regarding influencer marketing through structured interviews with seven respondents representing the high, medium, and low categories. The interviews focused on two indicators: credibility and popularity. The results indicate that influencer reviews play a crucial role as a source of educational and objective information that helps consumers understand products through explanations of specifications, features, and user experiences. Balanced reviews are perceived as more honest and build trust, thus increasing purchase intention and a positive brand image. Furthermore, influencers with a large number of subscribers and views are considered more credible because they are perceived as possessing social proof and high reliability in the eyes of consumers.

Six Indicators of *Influencer Marketing Credibility and Popularity*

No	Pernyataan	Jumlah	%	Kategori
1	Ada 100 video konten <i>review gadget</i> pada akun <i>influencer</i>	10	80	Kuat
	Rerata		80	Kuat

indicator has an average of 80% with a strong category, indicating that influencers have high consistency and determination in presenting credible gadget review content.

No	Pernyataan	Jumlah	%	Kategori
1	Ada 100.000 subscriber dan 10.000 view di akun influencer	10	72	Kuat
Rerata			76	Kuat

(Sumber : Data sekunder diolah bulan September 2025)

The influencer popularity indicator has an average of 72% with a strong category, which shows the influencer's consistency and determination in building an image and credibility through gadget review content.

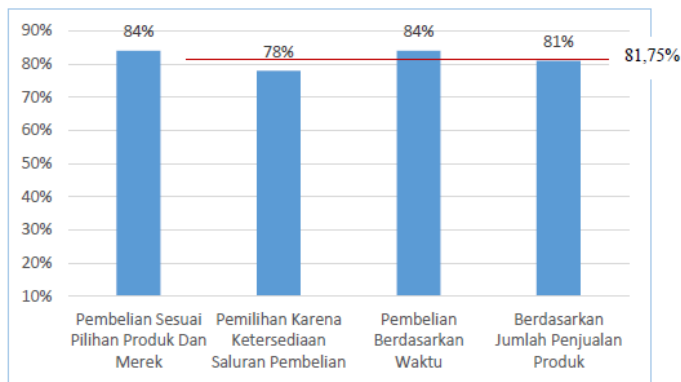
Seven, Research Findings

No.	Analysis Indicators	Research Findings
1.	Purchasing Indicators According to Product and Brand Choices	The findings show that product characteristics are the most dominant factor in gadget purchasing decisions, accounting for 89% of the purchase, followed by design and brand reputation at 85%. Consumers tend to be rational, emphasizing technical specifications, innovative features, and modern designs that reflect their lifestyle, while still considering price and financial affordability. The combination of reliability, aesthetics, and brand trust are key factors influencing gadget purchasing decisions.
2.	Selection Indicator Due to Availability of Purchasing Channels	The findings show that trust and ease of service are the primary factors in choosing where to buy gadgets, with a high percentage of 88%. Consumers prefer official stores because they are perceived as more trustworthy and accessible. Furthermore, ease of payment methods also plays a significant role (86%), although it isn't as strong without the support of trust (66%). Presence in various marketplaces only serves to compare prices and promotions, but it isn't as strong an influence as trust in official stores.
3.	Time Based Purchase Indicators	The findings indicate that functional and rational considerations are the most dominant factors in gadget purchasing decisions, accounting for 88.96% of consumers' decisions, with consumers prioritizing long-term product quality and durability. Social influences, such as recommendations from close friends, also play a significant role (84%), while brand popularity and current trends have the least influence (82%). This confirms that Sriwijaya

No.	Analysis Indicators	Research Findings
		University's Economics Education students, class of 2023, are more oriented toward long-term utility and benefits than simply following trends.
4.	Indicators Based on Number of Product Sales	The findings show that consumer reviews and testimonials are the most influential factors in gadget purchasing decisions with a percentage of 88%, reflecting the rational and critical attitude of Economics Education students in the class of 2023. Meanwhile, external factors such as the number of enthusiasts and sales levels only have an influence of 81%, and the majority of respondents (70%) stated that they are not affected by sales levels, indicating that purchasing decisions are based on different individual needs.

Source: processed by the author, 2025

The research results can be described in the following table, which reveals that



(Sumber : Data peneliti, diolah Agustus 2025)

The research findings show that all purchasing decision indicators have a relatively balanced influence. Purchasing based on product and brand choice and purchasing based on timing achieved the highest percentages at 84% (very good category), followed by product sales volume at 81% and purchasing channel availability at 78% (good category). This indicates that brand choice, purchase timing, and sales volume are the most influential factors in influencing consumers' gadget choices.

CONCLUSION

The results of the study indicate that *influencer marketing* has a significant influence on the purchasing decisions of students of the Economics Education Study Program, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Sriwijaya University, class of 2023, with the calculated t value (14.394) greater than the t table (1.664), so H_0 is rejected and H_a is accepted. The influence reached 73.42%, while the remaining 26.58% was influenced by other factors outside this study. This finding confirms that marketing strategies through influencers have proven effective in shaping students' purchasing decisions, especially because the credibility, popularity, and delivery style of influencers

are able to influence consumer perceptions and trust in recommended products.

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