

Celebrity Endorsers and Online Customer Reviews on Purchase Decisions: The Mediating Role of Brand Trust

Nanik Rukhayati^{1*},
(nanirk97@gmail.com)

Department of Management, Faculty of Economi and Business, University Islam
Nahdlatul Ulama, Jepara, Indonesia

Ali Ali²

(ali@unisnu.ac.id)

Department of Management, Faculty of Economi and Business, University Islam
Nahdlatul Ulama, Jepara, Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

This study analyzes the impact of a famous person endorsers and internet client testimonials on purchasing choices, with confidence in the brand serving as a variable that mediates in the context of the Hanasui cosmetics. A numerical research strategy was used, with surveys distributed to 100 consumers of Hanasui products in Jepara Regency, using purposive sampling. Gathered structural equation modeling with partial least squares (PLS-SEM) in SmartPLS 3.0 was used to evaluate the data and examine both direct and indirect connections among the variables. The findings show that celebrity endorsers and online customer reviews have a favorable and noteworthy impact on brand trust and Purchasing choices. Furthermore, brand have faith is proven to mediate the connection between celebrity endorsers also purchasing decisions, in addition to between Online consumer evaluations and purchases choices. This research contributes novelty by integrating internet and celebrity endorsements into customer evaluations within a brand trust mediation framework, which has rarely been examined in previous studies, particularly in the context of local cosmetic brands. However, the results stress the significance of strengthening brand trust through credible celebrity endorsers and authentic customer reviews to enhance digital marketing effectiveness and foster customer loyalty.

Keywords: *Celebrity Endorsers; Online Customer Reviews; Brand Trust; Purchasing Decisions*

1. INTRODUCTION

The Indonesian industry has shown substantial expansion in the last few years, driven by increasing public awareness of skin health and personal appearance. Lifestyle shifts, rapid digitalization, and the extensive use of social media have transformed skincare and cosmetic products into essential lifestyle components, particularly among younger consumers. As the skin functions as the body's primary defense against external threats such as ultraviolet radiation and chemical exposure, customers are picking more carefully these days, cosmetic goods that emphasize safety and quality.

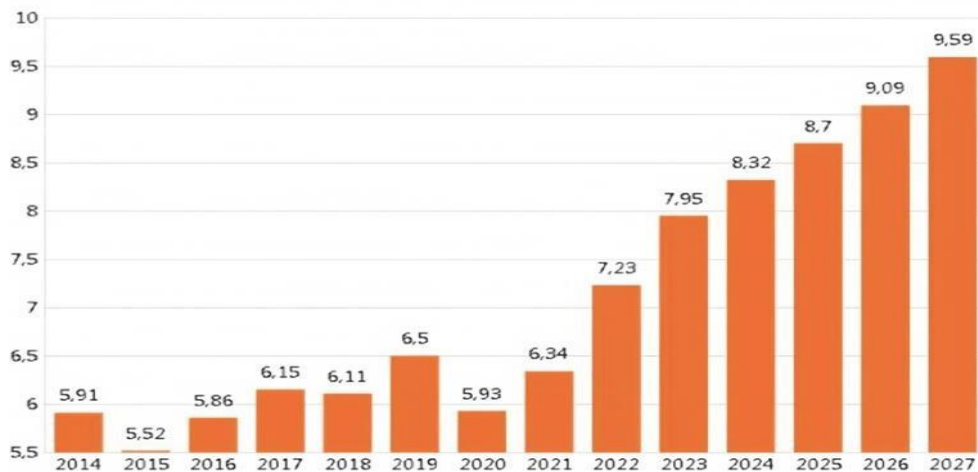


Figure 1: Skincare and makeup revenue in Indonesia

Source: Databoks.katadata.co.id (2025)

Statistical evidence supports this development. The Industry Ministry of the Indonesian Republic reported that the quantity of domestic cosmetic companies increased from 913 in 2022 to 1,010 in 2023, representing a growth of 21.9%. In addition, Databoks Katadata (2025) reported that Indonesia's cosmetics and skincare market reached approximately USD 7.23 million, equivalent to IDR 111.83 trillion, during the 2022–2027 period, with a 5.81% compound annual growth rate (CAGR). This rapid expansion has intensified competition within the industry, encouraging companies to adopt effective digital marketing strategies to maintain consumer interest and trust. One local cosmetic brand that has adapted well to this competitive environment is Hanasui. Established in 2016 and manufactured by PT Eka Jaya Internasional, Hanasui is widely recognized for offering affordable skincare and beauty products while maintaining acceptable quality standards. The brand actively employs digital marketing strategies, including collaborations with celebrity endorsers, influencer marketing, and the utilization of online client testimonials on different e-commerce and social media platforms to strengthen consumer engagement and stimulate purchasing decisions.

Hanasui was selected as the object of this study because it represents a growing local cosmetic brand that relies heavily on celebrity endorsement and online customer reviews as its primary promotional tools. Despite its increasing popularity, empirical studies examining consumer trust and purchasing behavior toward local cosmetic brands such as Hanasui remain limited, as previous research has predominantly focused on international or premium cosmetic brands. This condition highlights the relevance of Hanasui as a research setting in the Indonesian cosmetics industry. Celebrity endorsement has become a prominent strategy in digital marketing. Celebrities are used as brand representatives due to their credibility, attractiveness, and social influence, which can shape favorable brand perceptions (Erdogan, 2020) highlights the fact that these attributes have a significant part in enhancing endorsement effectiveness. Supporting this view, (Chinomona et al., 2023) found that the selection of appropriate, important celebrity endorsers factors into customer trust and buying behavior.

Apart from celebrity endorsements, online customer reviews commonly known as electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM), have gained considerable significance in influencing consumer decisions. Reviews shared by previous users on digital platforms are generally perceived as more trustworthy than traditional

advertising because they reflect actual user experiences (Filieri, R., & Mariani, 2022). Moreover, the reliability, depth, and sincerity of online reviews play a vital part in building consumer confidence and molding purchasing objectives (Ismagilova et al., 2023). Trust in a brand functions as a key mechanism linking marketing communication and consumer decision-making. Trust develops when customers believe a brand is trustworthy, safe, and capable of meeting their expectations (Delgado-Ballester, 2021). Customers who have high degrees of brand trust are more likely to repurchase products and distribute positive experiences with others (Chaudhuri, A., & Holbrook, 2022). Purchasing decisions represent the final stage of the consumer decision-making procedure, which entails determining problems, obtaining data, weighing options, and final selection (Kotler, P., & Keller, 2022). In digital marketing contexts, Decisions on purchases are strongly influenced by trust in the brand, online customer feedback, and celebrity driven promotional activities (Chen, Y., & Wang, 2023).

Although numerous studies have examined the immediate consequences of celebrity support and internet user feedback on purchasing, limited empirical research has explored brand trust's mediating function, especially in light of local cosmetic brands throughout Indonesia. Most earlier research analyzes these variables separately, leaving a gap in understanding their integrated influence within a single conceptual structure. Based on this research gap, the purpose of this research is to examine the impact of celebrity endorsers and internet client testimonials on consumers' buying choices for Hanasui cosmetics, with confidence in the brand acting as a mediating variable. It is anticipated that this research will theoretically enrich the digital marketing and brand trust literature, and realistically, offer guidance for local cosmetic businesses in designing more effective digital marketing strategies.

This introduction provides a comprehensive overview of the development of the Indonesian cosmetics industry, highlighting the growing relevance of digital marketing strategies in shaping consumer behavior. It also clearly identifies a research gap, particularly the limited empirical attention given to local cosmetic brands and the insufficient examination of type confidence as a means of mediation in the connection between digital promotional factors and buy decisions. Consequently, this research seeks to close this gap by looking at the effects of a famous person endorsers and internet client testimonials on purchasing choices, with confidence in the brand positioned as a variable that mediates in the context of a regional cosmetic brand. By focusing on Hanasui, this research offers a clearer articulation of its novelty and advances a better comprehension of trust-based mechanisms in digital marketing within the Indonesian cosmetics industry.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND HYPOTHESIS FORMULATION

Purchase Decisions

Purchase decisions represent the culmination of Consumers' decision-making process, involving issue identification, information gathering, and the assessment of alternatives, and the final choice to buy a product (Kotler, P., & Keller, 2022). In contemporary digital markets, this process extends beyond rational evaluation and increasingly incorporates social influence, online information, and trust-based considerations. Digital environments enable consumers to access diverse information sources, including public figures and peer-generated content, which significantly shape perceptions and reduce uncertainty during decision-making.

Recent studies emphasize that purchasing decisions in online contexts are influenced by emotional assurance and perceived credibility derived from digital interactions (Chen, Y., & Wang, 2023). In the cosmetic industry, where products are closely associated with personal appearance and health, consumers tend to rely heavily on trusted information sources before making purchase decisions (Agesti et al, 2021). Consequently, purchasing decisions are not solely driven by product attributes but also by the level of trust formed through consumer communication and marketing experiences.

Celebrity Endorser

Given the circumstances, celebrity endorsement is the use of renowned public figures to communicate brand messages and influence consumer attitudes. The theory of Source Credibility posits that the efficiency of celebrity endorsers is determined by three core dimensions: attractiveness, trustworthiness, and expertise (Ohanian, 1990). When endorsers are perceived as credible, their positive attributes can be transferred to the brand, resulting in favorable brand evaluations. In digital marketing contexts, celebrity endorsers function not only as promotional figures but also as symbolic representatives who shape consumer perceptions through social media presence and public reputation. (Erdogan, 2020) highlights that congruence between the endorser's image and brand values enhances endorsement effectiveness. Empirical evidence supports this assertion, demonstrating that credible celebrity endorsers strengthen brand trust and positively influence purchasing decisions, particularly in the beauty and cosmetic sector (Chinomona et al., 2023; Dellarosa, S., Kim, J., & Lee, 2025). Thus, the role of celebrity endorsers is a strategic part in building trust-based relationships between brands and consumers.

Online Customer Review

Customer reviews on the internet, also known as electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM), consist of customer generated evaluations shared through digital platforms. Unlike firm-generated advertising, e-WOM is perceived as more authentic and objective because it reflects actual consumer experiences (Fileri, R., & Mariani, 2022). The influence of online reviews depends largely on their credibility, clarity, and informational quality rather than their quantity alone (Ismagilova et al., 2023). In the cosmetic industry, online reviews from customers act as a crucial reference for customers looking to reduce perceived risk prior to purchase. Positive and informative reviews enhance consumer confidence and contribute to more favorable brand evaluations (Agesti et al, 2021). As a result, e-WOM not only shapes purchase decisions directly but also plays an important role in fostering trust toward a brand by providing experience-based information.

Brand Trust

The term "brand trust" describes customers' perception that a brand consistently delivers reliable, safe, and high-quality products and fulfills its promises (Delgado-Ballester, 2021). Trust develops through accumulated positive experiences, consistent product performance, and credible communication. In industries characterized by high perceived risk, such as cosmetics, trust in a brand becomes a decisive element in Consumer conduct. (Chaudhuri, A., & Holbrook, 2022) Argues that perceived danger is decreased by brand trust and that this strengthens long-term relationships between consumers and brands. Consumers who trust a brand are more confident in their purchase decisions and more likely to demonstrate loyalty. Therefore, brand trust functions as a key psychological

mechanism linking marketing communication, including celebrity endorsement and online customer reviews, to purchasing decisions.

Celebrity Endorsements and Brand Trust

(Roobina Ohanian, 1990) Explains that the persuasive power of celebrity endorsers is rooted in three main attributes: expertise, trustworthiness, and attractiveness. These attributes serve as important cues that help consumers evaluate brand reliability and reduce uncertainty during decision-making. In line with this perspective, (Erdogan, 1999) highlights that the success of celebrity endorsements is mostly determined by the degree of alignment between the famous person's image and the company, allowing symbolic meanings to be transferred to the product or brand. (Amanda Spry, 2021) Argue that celebrities carry social meanings that can be associated with brands, leading consumers to understand the brand as more trustworthy. When a celebrity is thought of positively, these favorable perceptions are often projected onto the endorsed brand, strengthening brand trust. Empirical evidence from (Rushworth, C., & Djafarova, 2017) and (Chinomona et al., 2023) supports this view, demonstrating that brands endorsed by well-known and credible public figures tend to generate higher levels of consumer trust, particularly in product categories where consumer involvement is high. The following hypothesis is put out in light of these theoretical discoveries and empirical data:

H₁: Celebrity endorsements have a positive and significant effect on brand trust

Online Customer Reviews and Brand Trust

Electronic Word of Mouth or e-WOM, has become a crucial source of information in online environments because it reflects genuine consumer experiences. Compared to company-generated messages, online customer reviews are frequently seen as being more reliable and trustworthy. (Filieri, R., & Mariani, 2022). According to (Ismagilova et al., 2023), the extent to which reviews are informative, objective, and well-structured significantly influences consumers' trust in the reviews. Additionally, (D. Park & K.S. Lee, 2020) emphasize that the consistency and clarity of online reviews are essential to shaping a brand. Have faith, as inconsistent or ambiguous information may increase consumer doubt. In this context, online evaluations serve not only as evaluative instruments, but also as mechanisms that help Customers assess the dependability of a brand. Previous studies consistently show that positive and credible online reviews contribute significantly to the development of brand trust. Accordingly, the following theory is put forth:

H₂: Online customer reviews have a positive and significant effect on brand trust

Celebrity Endorsements and Purchase Decisions

Celebrity endorsements influence consumer purchase decisions by leveraging social visibility and symbolic appeal. (Kotler, P., & Keller, 2022) Argue that celebrities can build emotional connections with consumers, which can shape product perceptions and preferences. This explanation is consistent with the theory of planned behavior (Icek Ajzen, 1991). This highlights the function of social influence in forming the intentions of behavior. In addition, celebrities often function as reference figures whose opinions and lifestyles influence consumer choices, particularly in industries such as cosmetics, where self-image and identity expression are important. Empirical studies by (Scheinbaum, 2018) and (Dellarosa, S., Kim, J., & Lee, 2025) provide evidence that celebrity endorsements positively

and greatly impact purchase choices by improving perceived value and reducing customers' hesitation to buy. Therefore, the following theory is put forth:

H₃: Celebrity endorsements have a positive and significant effect on purchase decisions

Online Customer Reviews and Purchase Decisions

In digital marketplaces, online customer reviews play an essential part in supporting consumers make choices. (Cheung, C. M. K., & Thadani, 2019) Suggest that reviews perceived as credible and relevant increase consumers' evaluations of product usefulness, which directly influences purchase decisions. (Ismail Erkan & Chris Evans, 2018) Highlight that the credibility of reviews significantly affects consumers' confidence when choosing products. This influence is especially evident in the cosmetics industry, where customers frequently rely on peer reviews due to limited opportunities for product trials. Empirical findings from (Agesti et al, 2021) confirm that favorable internet evaluations significantly increase the probability that customers will make a purchase decision. Considering this discussion, the following hypothesis is stated:

H₄: Online customer reviews have a positive and significant effect on purchase decisions

Brand Trust and Purchase Decisions

Trust in a brand refers to customers' trust in a brand's dependability and ability to fulfill its assurances. According to (Delgado-Ballester, 2021), trust plays a crucial role in reducing perceived risk and encouraging consumers to engage in purchasing behavior. From a relationship marketing perspective, trust is a key component of sustaining long-range interactions between brands and consumers. (Chaudhuri, A., & Holbrook, 2022) further argue that Customers who have faith in a brand tend to feel more secure and confident when making a purchase decision. Supporting this view, (Agesti et al., 2021) find that greater concentrations of brand trust are linked to stronger purchase intentions and actual buying behavior. Thus, the following theory is put forth:

H₅: Brand trust has a positive and significant effect on purchase decisions

The Mediating Role of Brand Trust in the Relationship between Celebrity Endorsements and Purchase Decisions

(Baron, R. M., & Kenny, 1986) define mediation as a process that explains how an independent variable influences a dependent variable through an intervening mechanism. In the context of celebrity endorsements, celebrities may influence purchase decisions not only directly but also indirectly by strengthening brand trust. When consumers perceive a celebrity endorser as credible, this perception is transferred to the brand, increasing trust and subsequently enhancing consumers' confidence in purchasing the product. Empirical studies by (Chinomona et al., 2023) and (Lien, C. H., Wen, M. J., Huang, L. C., & Wu, 2022) provide evidence that faith in a brand serves as a mediating function in the connection between celebrity recommendations and purchasing choices. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H₆: Brand trust mediates the relationship between celebrity endorsements and purchase decisions

The Mediating Role of Brand Trust in the Relationship between Online Customer Reviews and Purchase Decisions

Online customer reviews provide experience-based and reliable information that helps consumers reduce uncertainty. (Aljarah, A., Alalwan, A. A., & Karsh, 2020) and (Fileri, R., & Mariani, 2022) Argue that trust developed through online reviews is a key factor that translates review information into actual purchasing behavior. In this process, online reviews first influence consumers' trust perceptions, which subsequently affect their purchase decisions. As a result, brand trust serves as an important psychological mechanism linking online customer reviews to consumer purchasing behavior. Accordingly, the following hypothesis is formulated:

H7: Brand trust mediates the relationship between online customer reviews and purchase decisions

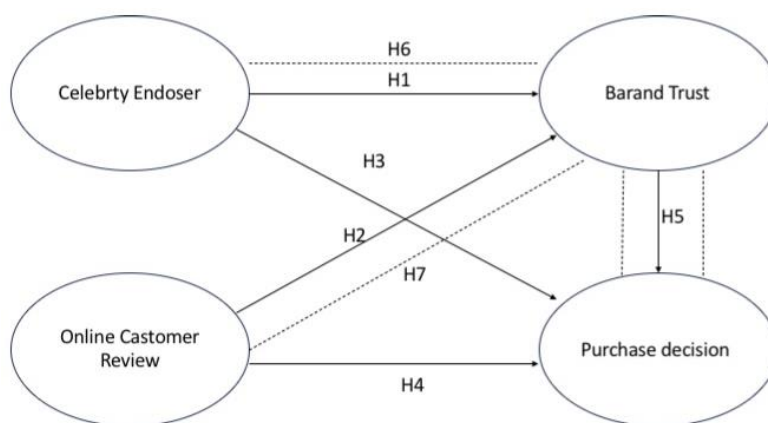


Figure 2: Conceptual framework
Source: processed by Author (2025)

3. RESEARCH METHODS

This research investigates the effects of internet consumer evaluations and celebrity endorsements on brand trust and consumer decisions for Hanasui cosmetics. The research adopts A quantitative design that aims to clarify causal connections among the examined variables using empirical evidence. This approach enables a systematic and objective assessment of how digital promotional factors shape brand trust and purchasing behavior. Jepara Regency was selected as the research location due to its relatively large population of Hanasui product users and the high intensity of social media engagement among consumers. These characteristics make Jepara a relevant setting for investigating digital marketing communication and the formation of brand trust at the local level. Methodologically, this choice is justified by the strong interaction between consumers and digital promotional content, which supports the study's explanatory purpose. The population of this research includes Hanasui Jepara Regency residents who purchase cosmetics. The sample size was obtained using (Purba Rao, 2016) with a 95% degree of assurance and a 10% error margin, because the precise population number could not be ascertained. Although a 10% margin of error is relatively high, it is considered acceptable in exploratory and early stage consumer behavior research, particularly when population parameters are unknown, and data collection relies on online surveys.

$$n = \frac{Z^2 \times p \times q}{d^2}$$

Description:

n: minimum sample size

Z: normal distribution value (1.96 for a 95% confidence level)

p: assumed proportion of the population (0.5)

q: 1-p

d: error limit (0.1)

Based on calculations

$$n = \frac{(1,96)^2 \times 0,5 \times 0,5}{(0,1)^2} = 96,04$$

Based on the calculation, the bare minimum required sample size was 96 respondents. To improve data representation and analytical robustness, the final sample was set at 100 respondents. Respondents were identified and recruited through online platforms, including Instagram, TikTok, and marketplace communities where Hanasui products are actively discussed. The survey link was distributed across multiple online groups and social media channels to minimize sampling bias and ensure a more equitable distribution of respondents by age and purchasing experience. A purposive sampling technique was applied, with respondents required to meet at least one of the following criteria: (1) having purchased Hanasui cosmetic products at least once, (2) having been exposed to Hanasui promotions conducted by celebrities or influencers, and (3) having accessed and read customer reviews of Hanasui products through online platforms. A From strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree, a five-point Likert scale was used. Take an online survey to collect firsthand information (5). Secondary data were obtained from the scientific literature, textbooks, peer reviewed journal articles, and official reports relevant to digital marketing, brand trust, and consumer behavior.

The factors this study looked at include celebrity endorsers, online customers reviews, brand trust, and purchasing choices. For the operationalization of each construct, measurement indicators were adapted from established theories and prior empirical studies (Roobina Ohanian, 1990), (Filieri, R., & Mariani, 2022), (Delgado -Ballester, 2021), and Kotler and Keller (2022). To enhance methodological transparency, a table summarizing the measurement and operational definitions indicators of each variable is recommended. Information analysis was conducted utilizing SmartPLS 3.0, which applies the Structural equation modeling using partial least squares (PLS-SEM) technique. This method does not require strict assumptions of normal data distribution and works well for analyzing complex models with relatively tiny sample numbers.

Measurement model evaluation was performed through validity and reliability testing. Extracted Average Variance (AVE) was used to assess convergent validity, is assessed using values larger than 0.50 indicated satisfactory validity. Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability were used to evaluate reliability; values higher than 0.70 are considered satisfactory. Structural model assessment was based on the analysis of T-statistics, p-values, and R-squared values. If the p-value was less than 0.05 and the T-statistic was greater than 1.96, the theory was deemed statistically significant. In addition to examining direct consequences, this research conducted a mediation analysis by testing indirect consequences through the

bootstrapping procedure. The mediation analysis sought to ascertain whether brand trust mediates the effects of internet customer evaluations and celebrity endorsements on purchase decisions. Overall, this methodological approach is anticipated to offer meaningful insights regarding the efficacy of digital promotional tactics in strengthening brand trust and encouraging purchasing behavior among local cosmetic consumers.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Respondent Biographies

Table 1: Description of research respondents

Characteristics	Category	Number (of people)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Women	87	87,0
	Male	13	13,0
Age	< 20 year	8	8,0
	21–30 year	69	69,0
	31–40 year	18	18,0
	> 40 year	5	5,0
Work	Students	50	50,0
	Private Sector Employee	25	25,0
	Entrepreneur	15	15,0
Purchase Frequency	Others	10	10,0
	1 time	20	20,0
	2–3 times	52	52,0
Primary Information Sources	> 3 times	28	28,0
	Social Media	62	62,0
	Friends/Family	20	20,0
	Marketplace	10	10,0
	Celebrity Advertising/Endorsements	8	8,0

Source: processed by Author (2025)

Attributes of the participants involved in this research. Most respondents are female (87%), indicating that Hanasui products are predominantly used by women. Most Respondents fall between the age range of 21 and 30 years (69%), reflecting the primary target market of local cosmetic brands. In terms of occupation, students constitute the largest group (50%), followed by private sector employees and entrepreneurs. Regarding purchasing behavior, most respondents purchase Hanasui products two to three times, indicating moderate but consistent product usage. Social media emerges as the dominant source of information (62%), highlighting the importance of digital marketing, celebrity endorsements, and online customer reviews in shaping consumer Purchasing choices for Hanasui products.

Assessment of Measurement Model

The measurement model was assessed. using the SmartPLS application to evaluate the reliability and validity of the research instruments. The evaluation process was conducted iteratively to ensure that all indicators met the minimum

factor loading threshold of 0.70, as recommended by (Hair, 2021). Indicators with factor loadings below this threshold were carefully reviewed and removed to enhance construct reliability and validity.

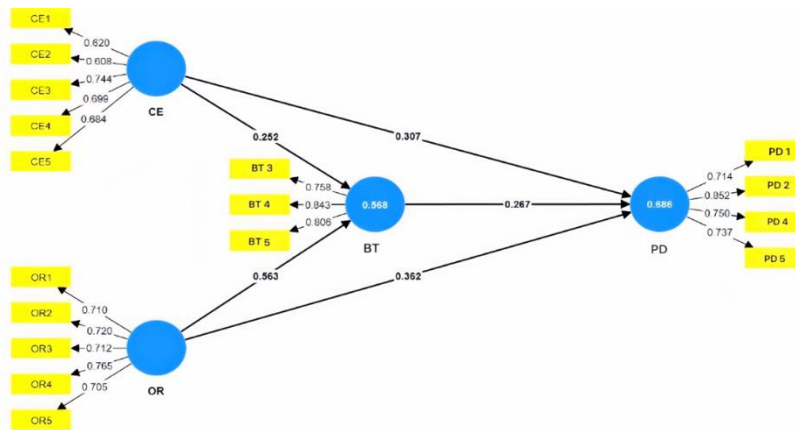


Figure 3. Model and outer loading second order
 Source: Data processed by Author (2025)

Outer Loading

Table 2: External load

	CE	BT	PD	OR
CE1	0.620			
CE2	0.608			
CE3	0.744			
CE4	0.699			
CE5	0.684			
BT3		0.758		
BT4		0.843		
BT5		0.806		
PD1			0.714	
PD2			0.852	
PD4			0.750	
PD5			0.737	
OR1				0.710
OR2				0.720
OR3				0.712
OR4				0.765
OR5				0.705

Source: data processed by Author (2025)

Table 2 illustrates that all indicators display outer loading parameters exceeding 0.60, indicating satisfactory convergent validity. The celebrity endorser indicators range from 0.608 to 0.744, demonstrating consistent representation of consumer perceptions toward endorsers. Brand trust indicators show strong loadings between 0.758 and 0.843, while purchasing decision indicators range from 0.714 to 0.852, reflecting high reliability. Similarly, online customer review indicators display acceptable values between 0.705 and 0.765. These findings verify that all measurement items are suitable for future structural model examination (Hair, 2021)

Reliability and Construct Validity

Table 3: Construct reliability and validity

	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability (rho_a)	Composite Reliability (rho_c)	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
CE	0.697	0.704	0.804	0.453
BT	0.724	0.727	0.845	0.645
PD	0.762	0.767	0.849	0.585
OR	0.773	0.775	0.845	0.523

Source: data processed by Author (2025)

Table 3 indicates that all constructs demonstrate adequate reliability, with Cronbach's Alpha values between from 0.697 to 0.773 and composite reliability exceeding the recommended threshold. Most constructs also achieve values above 0.50 for Average Variance Extracted (AVE). Although the AVE value for the celebrity endorser construct is slightly below the recommended threshold, (C. Fornell & D. F. Larcker, 2020) suggest that constructs remain acceptable when composite reliability is sufficiently high. Therefore, all constructs in this study are considered reliable and valid.

Discriminant Validity

Table 4: Discriminant validity

	CE	BT	PD	OR
CE				
BT	0.869			
PD	0.961	0.964		
OR	0.882	0.961	0.982	

Source: data processed by Author (2025)

Table 4 confirms that discriminant validity is achieved, as the square roots of the AVEs for each construct exceed their correlations with other constructs. This result indicates that each variable represents a distinct concept and does not overlap excessively with other constructs (Henseler, J., Ringle, C. M., & Sarstedt, 2020).

Direct Hypothesis Testing/Total Effect

Table 5: Hypothesis Test Results (Total Effect)

Connection	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values
CE → BT	0.252	0.254	0.091	2.771	0.006
CE → PD	0.307	0.315	0.093	3.293	0.001
BT → PD	0.267	0.260	0.091	2.921	0.004
OR → BT	0.563	0.567	0.085	6.635	0.000
OR → PD	0.362	0.361	0.103	3.507	0.000

Source: data processed by Author (2025)

The structural model analysis demonstrates significant relationships among the variables. All hypothesized paths show T-statistic values exceeding the critical P-values and the threshold below 0.05, indicating strong statistical support for the suggested model. The results confirm that celebrity endorsers and online customer

reviews significantly influence brand trust and purchasing choices. This has a big impact on buying decisions, supporting its central role in the model. These results are consistent with prior studies, stressing the significance of credibility and trust in digital marketing contexts (Osei-Frimpong et al, 2023)

Testing Indirect Effects/Mediation

Table 6: Specific indirect impacts

Connection	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values
CE → BT → PD	0.067	0.066	0.034	1.966	0.049
OR → BT → PD	0.150	0.148	0.059	2.552	0.011

Source: data processed by Author (2025)

Trust in the brand, with a p-value of 0.049, acts as a mediator between celebrity endorsement and purchase choice, as shown in Table 6 (Lou, C., & Yuan, 2022), which supports these findings. They state that trust connects marketing communication with buyer behavior during the purchasing process. In addition, when the p-value is zero, it means the brand has faith that acts as a link between purchasing decisions and celebrity endorsements. (Hernández-Ortega & Álvarez-Herrero, 2021) states that brand trust is an important psychological component in digital information processing before consumers decide to purchase something.

Hypothesis Test

Table 7: Hypothesis testing

Hypothesis	Relationship Between Variables	Path Coefficient (O)	T-Statistics	P-Values	Decision
H1	Celebrity Endorser → Brand Trust	0.252	2.771	0.006	Accepted
H2	Celebrity Endorser → Purchase Decision	0.307	3.293	0.001	Accepted
H3	Brand Trust → Purchase Decision	0.267	2.921	0.004	Accepted
H4	Online Customer Reviews → Brand Trust	0.563	6.635	0.000	Accepted
H5	Online Customer Reviews → Purchase Decision	0.362	3.507	0.000	Accepted
H6	Celebrity Endorser → Brand Trust → Purchase Decision	0.067	1.966	0.049	Accepted
H7	Online Customer Reviews → Brand Trust → Purchase Decision	0.150	2.552	0.011	Accepted

Source: data processed by Author (2025)

Table 7 indicates that the result of the hypothesis is:

1. The table shows that the path coefficient for the connection between celebrity endorser and confidence in brands is 0.252. This positive coefficient indicates that celebrity endorsement contributes positively to brand trust formation. The t-statistic of 2.771, which is above the 1.96 crucial value, and the p-value of

- 0.006, which is below 0.05, confirm which that this relationship is statistically significant. The coefficient magnitude suggests a moderate effect size, meaning that improvements in celebrity endorser attributes are associated with a moderate increase in brand trust toward Hanasui.
2. For Hypothesis 2, the coefficient of the path is 0.307, indicating a stronger favorable impact in contrast to H₁. This means that celebrity endorsement has a more substantial direct influence on purchasing decisions than on brand trust. The t-statistic of 3.293 with a p-value of 0.001 provides strong statistical evidence supporting this relationship. The relatively higher coefficient value suggests that celebrity endorsers play a direct and meaningful role in encouraging customers to decide what to buy for Hanasui goods.
 3. The connection between purchasing and brand trust decision shows a path coefficient of 0.267. This value indicates that brand trust has a positive and meaningful influence on consumers' purchase decisions. The t-statistic of 2.921 and p-value of 0.004 confirm that this effect is statistically significant. The coefficient implies that increases in brand trust lead to a noticeable increase in the likelihood of purchasing Hanasui products.
 4. Hypothesis 4 exhibits the largest path coefficient in the table, equal to 0.563, indicating a strong positive impact of internet consumer feedback on brand confidence. The t-statistic of 6.635 is substantially higher than the threshold value, and the p-value of 0.000 signifies very substantial statistical significance. From a numerical perspective, this coefficient suggests that online reviews are the most dominant predictor of brand trust among all variables tested in the model.
 5. The path coefficient for Online consumer reviews' impact on purchasing decisions is 0.362. This suggests a solidly favorable association. The t-statistic 3.507 and the p-value of 0.000 demonstrate that this relationship is based on statistics is significant. Compared to other direct effects on purchase decisions, this coefficient is larger than that for brand trust (H₃) and close to that for celebrity endorsement (H₂), highlighting the significance of internet reviews in shaping consumer purchasing behavior. Discussion of Indirect Effects (Mediation Analysis)
 6. The specific indirect effect coefficient for this mediation path is 0.067. Although smaller than the immediate result of a celebrity supporter on a purchase decision, the indirect impact remains positive. The t-statistic of 1.966, which slightly surpasses the threshold at 1.96, and the p-value of 0.049 indicate that the mediation effect is significant statistically at the 5% degree. Numerically, this result suggests that brand trust partially mediates the effect of a famous person endorser on purchase decisions, but the magnitude of the indirect effect is relatively weak.
 7. The indirect effect coefficient for this path is 0.150, which is more than double the value observed in H₆. The t-statistic of 2.552 and the p-value of 0.011 confirm that this is an indirect effect. There is a statistically significant effect. From a numerical standpoint, this indicates that trust in the brand plays a stronger mediating function in the connection between online customer reviews and buy decision compared to the mediation effect involving celebrity endorsers.

Discussion

The Effect of Celebrity Endorser on Brand Trust

Celebrity endorsers function as persuasive communication agents whose perceived credibility shapes consumers' trust toward a brand. In the cosmetic industry, where consumers often face information asymmetry and product uncertainty, a credible endorser becomes particularly important. For Hanasui, celebrity endorsers act as symbolic representatives who help consumers infer product reliability and safety, especially when endorsers are perceived as knowledgeable and authentic (Ohanian, 1990).

Brand trust is reflected through indicators such as reliability, honesty, and confidence in brand promises. When a celebrity endorser is perceived as trustworthy and competent, these attributes are transferred to the brand, thereby strengthening customer confidence. This mechanism conforms to the theory of source credibility, which emphasizes that communicator credibility plays a decisive role in shaping audience attitudes and beliefs toward a brand (Ali et al., 2024) (K. Zulfa & S. Arifin, 2024). Empirical findings from recent studies support this relationship, particularly in the cosmetic sector. Research shows that celebrity endorsement positively influences brand trust by enhancing brand credibility and perceived integrity (Delgado-Ballester, 2021). However, other studies argue that endorsement may fail to build trust when consumers perceive it as merely commercial or lacking congruence with the brand's identity (Erdogan, 1999). In the context of Hanasui, the alignment between the celebrity image and brand values appears to reinforce consumer trust.

The Effect of Celebrity Endorser on Purchase Decision

Celebrity endorsers also influence consumers' purchase decisions by shaping emotional responses and symbolic meanings associated with a product. For Hanasui consumers, celebrities act as aspirational figures whose product usage signals social approval and desirability. This is particularly relevant for younger consumer segments are highly engaged with social media and celebrity culture (Erdogan, 2020). Purchase decision indicators, such as confidence in the product choice and willingness to buy, are influenced by the alleged beauty and relevance of the endorsement. When consumers connect with the celebrity, they are more likely to internalize the endorsed behavior and translate it into actual purchase decisions. This process reflects the meaning transfer model, which describes how Brands inherit the meanings of celebrities, and subsequently transfer them to customers (Sekar Ayu Agustina, 2023).

Prior empirical studies confirm that purchases are positively impacted by celebrity endorsements decisions in the cosmetic (Dellarosa, S., Kim, J., & Lee, 2025). Nevertheless, some research suggests that the influence of celebrity endorsers may diminish when consumers rely more heavily on Online Customer Reviews or personal experience (Dellarosa, S., Kim, J., & Lee, 2025). Despite this, celebrity endorsement remains a significant factor influencing Hanasui customers' purchasing decisions.

The Effect of Brand Trust on Purchase Decision

Trust in a brand is a critical determinant of purchase decisions, particularly for products related to personal care and appearance. For Hanasui consumers, brand trust reflects confidence in product safety, ingredient quality, halal certification, and consistent performance. These trust-related indicators reduce perceived risk and

encourage consumers to proceed with purchasing decisions. According to Relationship Marketing Theory, trust serves as a fundamental relational asset that fosters consumer commitment and long-term behavioral outcomes (Morgan, R. M., & Hunt, 1994). Customers are more likely to make purchases from a brand they trust, repeat purchases and are less likely to switch to competing brands.

Empirical research consistently supports the positive effect of brand trust on buy decisions in the cosmetic sector (Chaudhuri, A., & Holbrook, 2022), (Chen, Y., & Wang, 2023). However, some studies indicate that short-term promotional incentives can sometimes weaken the role of trust. The findings of this study suggest that for Hanasui, brand trust remains a dominant factor influencing purchase decisions.

The Effect of Online Customer Reviews on Brand Trust

Customer reviews found online represent a key form of electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM) that significantly shapes consumer trust in brands. In digital purchasing environments, Hanasui consumers rely on Online Customer Reviews to evaluate product effectiveness, skin compatibility, and overall satisfaction. These reviews are perceived as more genuine and reliable than information created by brands. Brand trust indicators such as reliability and credibility are influenced by the consistency, valence, and usefulness of Online Customer Reviews. From an e-WOM perspective, customer-generated reviews reduce information asymmetry and increase transparency, thereby strengthening brand trust (Cheung, C. M. K., & Thadani, 2012).

Most recent studies confirm that positive Online Customer Reviews significantly enhance brand trust in cosmetic products (Filieri, R., & Mariani, 2022). However, contradictory findings suggest that inconsistent or manipulated reviews may reduce trust. In the case of Hanasui, the presence of credible and consistent Online Customer Reviews appears to reinforce consumer trust.

The Effect of Online Customer Reviews on Purchase Decision

Online Customer Reviews directly influence purchase decisions by providing experiential information that helps consumers evaluate product alternatives. For Hanasui consumers, detailed reviews describing real usage experiences reduce uncertainty and increase confidence in product selection, particularly for first-time buyers. Indicators of purchase decision, such as intention to buy and preference formation, are shaped by the perceived usefulness and relevance of online customer reviews. This relationship aligns with the Information Adoption Model, which explains how consumers adopt information they perceive as credible and helpful in decision-making processes (S. W. Sussman & W. S. Siegal, 2003). Empirical evidence strongly supports the direct impact of Online customer reviews' on purchasing decisions in cosmetic and skincare markets (Ismagilova, E., Slade, E., Rana, N. P., & Dwivedi, 2023). Although some studies suggest that brand familiarity may weaken this effect, Online Customer Reviews remain an influential determinant of purchase decisions for Hanasui consumers.

The Mediating Role of Brand Trust in the Relationship between Celebrity Endorser and Purchase Decision

The relationship between celebrities is mediated by trust, endorser and buy decision. Celebrity endorsers enhance consumers' perceptions of credibility and reliability, which subsequently strengthen brand trust and motivate purchasing behavior. This indicates that endorsement effects operate through internal

psychological evaluations rather than direct persuasion alone. Trust-based marketing frameworks emphasize that trust acts as a mechanism that converts persuasive cues into behavioral outcomes (Gefen, D., Karahanna, E., & Straub, 2003). In the background of Hanasui, celebrity endorsement is effective when it successfully builds trust in the brand. Previous studies support the mediating role of brand trust in the celebrity endorsement-buying decision connection (Dwivedi, A., Johnson, L. W., & McDonald, 2024). While other mediators, such as emotional attachment, have been proposed, brand trust remains the most theoretically grounded mediator in this context.

The Mediating Role of Brand Trust in the Relationship between Online Customer Reviews and Purchase Decision

Additionally, brand trust mediates the connection between Online Customer Reviews and buy decisions. Positive Online Customer Reviews enhance consumers' trust in the brand, which then increases their willingness to make a purchase. This highlights the importance of trust as a bridge between information exposure and behavioral outcomes. Within the e-WOM framework, brand trust reduces perceived risk and increases decision confidence, particularly in online shopping environments where physical product evaluation is not possible (Pavlou, 2003). This mechanism is especially relevant for cosmetic products. Empirical studies support the mediating role of brand trust between Online Customer Reviews and purchase decisions (Erkan, I., & Evans, 2016) and (Agesti et al, 2021). Although perceived usefulness has been suggested as an alternative mediator, brand trust emerges as the most consistent explanatory mechanism for Hanasui consumers.

5. CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, SUGGESTIONS AND LIMITATION OF THE RESEARCH

This study confirms that online customer ratings and celebrity endorsements, and brand trust significantly influence consumers' purchasing decisions for Hanasui cosmetic products. The respondents, predominantly aged 21–30 years, represent a digitally active market segment that aligns with the characteristics of contemporary cosmetic consumers. The findings indicate that celebrity endorsers enhance purchase decisions primarily by strengthening brand trust through credibility and public recognition, while online customer reviews function as the most persuasive information source due to their perceived objectivity and authenticity. Furthermore, brand trust mediates the effects of both celebrity endorsement and online customer reviews, highlighting its central influence on consumers' decisions to buy cosmetics.

Theoretically, this study reinforces Source Credibility Theory in addition to electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM) by demonstrating that brand trust acts as a key psychological mechanism linking digital marketing communication and consumer purchasing behavior. These results support the existing literature by clarifying the function of trust as both an outcome and a driver in the consumer decision-making process. From a managerial stand point, the results stress the significance of trust-oriented marketing strategies, particularly for cosmetic brands. Companies should carefully select celebrity endorsers based on credibility and congruence with brand values, while actively managing online customer reviews to maintain positive brand perceptions and encourage informed purchase decisions.

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Based on the investigation's findings, Hanasui is encouraged to adopt a more selective approach to celebrity endorsers by prioritizing credibility, trustworthiness, and alignment with the product category. In addition, firms should systematically manage online customer reviews by promoting genuine consumer feedback and addressing negative reviews professionally. Ensuring consistent product quality remains essential to sustaining long-term brand trust. Future studies are advised to expand the research model by incorporating variables such as brand image, perceived quality, perceived price, or customer satisfaction. Employing a mixed-method approach and extending the research scope to different brands or industries would also improve the generalizability and depth of future findings.

This study is subject to several limitations. First, the findings are limited to Hanasui cosmetic consumers in Jepara Regency and may not represent broader consumer populations. Second, the use of self-reported survey data could result in subjective bias. Third, the research model focuses on a limited set of variables and does not account for other potential determinants of purchasing decisions. Finally, the cross-sectional design limits the capacity to record shifts in customer behavior over time. Upcoming studies may overcome these restrictions by applying designs that are longitudinal and broader analytical frameworks.

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