

The Digital Triad: Analyzing the Influence of Influencers, Live Streaming, and e-WOM on Skincare Purchase Decisions on TikTok

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Abstract: This study aims to empirically analyze the influence of influencers, live streaming features, and electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM) on the purchase decisions of Skintific skincare products among consumers in Kefamenanu City via the TikTok platform. This research employed a quantitative approach with a survey method. The sample consisted of 108 respondents who are consumers of Skintific products in Kefamenanu City and made purchases through TikTok, selected using a non-probability sampling technique. Data were collected through a questionnaire with a Likert scale, and the data were analyzed using multiple linear regression analysis to test the hypotheses partially (t-test) and simultaneously (F-test). The results indicate that the variables of influencer ($t=6.851$; $p<0.05$), live streaming feature ($t=4.175$; $p<0.05$), and electronic word-of-mouth ($t=3.142$; $p<0.05$) each have a positive and significant partial influence on purchase decisions. Simultaneously, all three independent variables also have a significant effect on purchase decisions ($F=6856.198$; $p<0.05$). These findings provide strategic insights for marketers in the beauty industry to optimize digital marketing strategies in regional markets. Businesses are advised to collaborate with highly credible influencers, utilize interactive live streaming features for product demonstrations, and encourage positive e-WOM to build trust and drive sales conversion. This research fills a literature gap by examining the effectiveness of digital marketing strategies on the TikTok platform within a non-metropolitan geographical context (Kefamenanu City). This study confirms that while digital marketing trends are global, their implementation requires an understanding of local consumer behavior, providing empirical evidence on the convergence of social media influence on purchase decisions in an emerging market.

Keywords: Purchase Decision, Influencer Marketing, Live Streaming Commerce, Electronic Word of Mouth, TikTok, Skincare Industry.

1. Introduction

The shift in the marketing landscape from conventional to digital realms has become an unavoidable global phenomenon, driven by technological advancements and changes in consumer behavior (Siaran et al., 2023). Social media platforms, particularly TikTok, have transformed from mere entertainment platforms into dynamic social commerce ecosystems, offering massive market potential for various industries, including the beauty sector (Dewi et al., 2023). One brand that has successfully leveraged TikTok's popularity is Skintific, whose products went viral due to innovative formulations such as ceramide content for skin barrier repair (Trilogy Triangle Effect - TTE).

Although digital marketing strategies like influencer marketing, live streaming, and electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM) have proven effective in major cities, their relevance in non-metropolitan areas such as Kefamenanu City still requires empirical validation. A preliminary survey of 50 consumers in Kefamenanu indicated that traditional factors like family or social environmental influences are not the primary drivers of purchase decisions for Skintific products. This suggests a research gap between the general assumptions about the effectiveness of digital marketing and the reality of consumer behavior in local markets (Kondi et al., 2025). Therefore, this study is designed to answer the question: To what extent do the roles of influencers, live streaming features, and e-WOM significantly influence the purchase decisions of Skintific skincare among TikTok consumers in Kefamenanu City?

2. Literature Review and Hypothesis Development

2.1. Purchase Decision

A purchase decision is a complex cognitive and behavioral process wherein consumers identify needs, search for information, evaluate alternatives, and ultimately choose to purchase a product or service (Kotler & Keller, 2016). This process is not only based on rational considerations such as price and quality but is also influenced by emotional, psychological, and social factors (Schiffman & Wisenblit, 2015; Peter & Olson, 2010). In the digital context, marketing stimuli such as online promotions and user reviews have become significant external factors in shaping perceptions and motivating purchase actions (Assael, 2001).

2.2. The Influence of Influencers on Purchase Decisions

An influencer is defined as an individual who possesses the capacity to affect the attitudes and behaviors of their audience through content shared on social media, owing to their credibility, expertise, and attractiveness (Freberg et al., 2011; Lou & Yuan, 2019). An influencer's credibility can build an emotional connection and trust with their followers, which in turn increases purchase intention, especially among Generation Z who rely on reviews from trusted sources (Rahmawati, 2021; Riadi et al., 2022). Previous research has consistently shown that influencer marketing has a positive and significant influence on purchase decisions across various platforms and product categories (Silaban, 2023; Triwardhani, 2023; Fauzia, 2024). Based on this foundation, the first hypothesis is formulated:

- H₁: Influencers have a positive and significant influence on the purchase decision of Skintific skincare products.

2.3. The Influence of Live Streaming Features on Purchase Decisions

The live streaming feature is an interactive communication technology that allows sellers to demonstrate products and interact with the audience in real-time (Wang et al., 2019). This two-way interaction has proven effective in reducing consumer uncertainty and building trust, as the audience can view the product transparently and receive instant answers to their questions (Hu & Chaudhry, 2020; Zhang et al., 2021). Several empirical studies have confirmed that live streaming has a significant impact on driving purchase decisions, as it creates a sense of urgency and provides a richer shopping experience (Anisa et al., 2022; Febriyantoro, 2023; Kamanda, 2024). Thus, the second hypothesis is proposed:

- H₂: The live streaming feature has a positive and significant influence on the purchase decision of Skintific skincare products.

2.4. The Influence of Electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM) on Purchase Decisions

Electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM) refers to any positive or negative statement made by actual, former, or potential customers about a product or company, which is available to the public via the internet (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004). Online reviews, testimonials, and recommendations on social media are considered more credible than traditional advertising because they originate from fellow consumers (Litvin et al., 2008). The motivation to share information and seek others' opinions online has made e-WOM one of the primary drivers in the decision-making process (Goldsmith & Horowitz, 2006). Previous research has consistently found that e-WOM has a positive and significant influence on purchase decisions (Padmawati & Suasana, 2021; Fadhilah & Saputra, 2022; Yulindasari & Fikriyah, 2022). Therefore, the third hypothesis is formulated:

- H₃: Electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM) has a positive and significant influence on the purchase decision of Skintific skincare products.

3. Research Methods

This study adopts a quantitative research design with a causal approach to analyze the relationships between variables. The population of this study comprises all consumers of Skintific skincare products in Kefamenanu City who made purchases through the TikTok application, with an indefinite total number (an infinite population). Sampling was conducted using a non-probability sampling technique, with a sample size of 108 respondents. This size was determined based on a parameter estimation formula, where the number of indicators (18) was multiplied by 6, in line with the recommended range (Ferdinand, 2014).

Primary data were collected through the distribution of a questionnaire using a 5-point Likert scale to measure respondents' perceptions of the variables: influencer (X₁), live streaming feature (X₂), e-WOM (X₃), and purchase decision (Y). The research instrument was tested for validity and reliability to ensure data quality. The data analysis technique used was multiple linear regression analysis with the aid of statistical software to test the research hypotheses partially (t-test) and simultaneously (F-test) at a significance level of $\alpha=0.05$. (Huda et al., 2025)

4. Result and Discussion

4.1. Result

4.1.1. Hypothesis Testing Results

The multiple linear regression analysis yielded findings that support all the proposed hypotheses. The Partial Test (t-test) showed that:

- The Influencer (X1) variable had a tvalue of 6.851, which is greater than the tcritical (2.600) with a significance level of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$). This confirms that H_1 is accepted.
 - The Live Streaming Feature (X2) variable showed a tvalue of 4.175, exceeding the tcritical (2.600) with a significance of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$), thus H_2 is accepted.
1. The Electronic Word of Mouth (X3) variable obtained a tvalue of 3.142, which is also greater than the tcritical (2.600) with a significance of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$), meaning H_3 is accepted.

Furthermore, the Simultaneous Test (F-test) yielded an Fvalue of 6856.198, far exceeding the Fcritical value (2.460) with a significance level of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$). This result indicates that the variables of influencer, live streaming feature, and e-WOM collectively have a highly significant influence on purchase decisions.

4.2. Discussion

The finding that influencers significantly affect purchase decisions aligns with the Source Credibility Theory and previous research (Silaban, 2023; Fauzia, 2024). In the context of Kefamenanu, influencers act not only as product information providers but also as sources of social validation. Their recommendations are perceived as a "shortcut" to trust, reducing the perceived risk in purchasing skincare products that require a high level of confidence. The phenomenon of parasocial interaction, where followers feel a personal closeness to the influencer, strengthens this influence and encourages the adoption of recommended products.

The significant influence of the live streaming feature supports the findings of Chamidah (2022) and Kamanda (2024), as well as the relevance of Media Richness Theory. Live streaming offers a rich communication medium, allowing for direct product demonstrations, Q&A interactions, and limited-time offers that create a sense of urgency (the scarcity effect). For consumers in Kefamenanu, this feature provides a transparent and reassuring shopping experience, bridging the gap between online shopping and the physical in-store experience.

Finally, the significance of electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM) confirms previous studies (Padmawati & Suasana, 2021; Yulindasari & Fikriyah, 2022) and underscores its role as a form of digital social capital. Reviews and testimonials from other users in TikTok comment sections or beauty forums serve as powerful social proof. Consumers tend to trust authentic experiences from fellow users more than marketing claims from the brand, making e-WOM a crucial factor in the alternative evaluation stage before making a purchase.

4.2.1. Theoretical Implications

Theoretically, this study contributes to the digital marketing literature by providing empirical evidence from an underrepresented geographical context. It reinforces the external validity of theories such as Source Credibility Theory and Media Richness Theory within the context of social commerce in emerging markets. Furthermore, the findings highlight the importance of considering contextual variables (geographical and cultural) in analyzing digital consumer behavior.

4.2.2. Managerial Implications

For marketing practitioners, especially for brands like Skintific, these results offer several strategic recommendations. First, brands should carefully select influencers (including micro and nano influencers) who have high engagement rates and credibility within local communities. Second, the optimization of live streaming features should focus on product education, audience interaction, and exclusive offers to encourage impulse purchases. Third, brands need to actively manage and encourage positive e-WOM by facilitating review platforms and appreciating customer testimonials.

4.2.3. Limitations and Future Research Directions

This study has several limitations. The use of a non-probability sampling method may limit the generalizability of the findings. Additionally, the study is cross-sectional, thus it does not capture the dynamics of consumer behavior changes over time. The focus on a single brand (Skintific) and a single platform (TikTok) also opens opportunities for future research. Subsequent research could adopt a longitudinal design, conduct comparative studies across different brands or platforms, and explore other moderating variables such as digital literacy or platform trust levels.

5. Conclusion

This study conclusively demonstrates that "The Digital Triad"—influencers, live streaming features, and electronic word-of-mouth—are strong predictors of Skintific skincare purchase decisions among TikTok users in Kefamenanu City, both individually and collectively. These findings affirm that the adoption of digital marketing strategies is no longer confined to urban centers but has permeated and proven effective in regional markets. Trust, interactivity, and social validation are the three core pillars driving the success of these strategies within the social commerce ecosystem.

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The authors declare that generative AI or AI-assisted technologies were not used in any way to prepare, write, or complete this manuscript. The authors confirm that they are the sole authors of this article and take full responsibility for the content therein, as outlined in COPE recommendations.

Informed Consent

The authors declare that informed consent was not required as there were no human participants involved.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

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