

Determination of Online Customer Reviews and Celebrity Endorsers on Buying Decisions Through Customer Satisfaction

*Fadli Adnin Nasution*¹, *Aswin Pratama Harahap*² *Satria Mirsya Affandy Nasution*³

Universitas Muhammadiyah Sumatera Utara

E-mail: fadliadnin@umsu.ac.id

ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the influence of online customer reviews and celebrity endorsers on purchasing decisions for Skintific skincare with customer satisfaction as an intervening variable in Medan City. This type of research is associative with a sample of 96 respondents in Medan City who use Skintific skincare. The data collection technique uses a questionnaire and the data analysis technique uses Partial Least Square (SmartPLS). The results of the study show that there is a positive and significant influence of online customer reviews on buying decisions, there is no influence of celebrity endorsers on purchasing decisions, there is a positive and significant influence of customer satisfaction on buying decisions, there is a positive and significant influence of online customer reviews on customer satisfaction, there is a positive and significant influence of celebrity endorsers on customer satisfaction, there is a positive and significant influence of online customer reviews indirectly on buying decisions through customer satisfaction, and there is a positive and significant influence of celebrity endorsers indirectly on buying decisions through customer satisfaction of Skintific skincare products..

Keywords: *Online Customer Reviews, Celebrity Endorsements*

INTRODUCTION

The development of digital technology and easy internet access have brought about significant changes in consumer behavior, particularly in shopping activities. The shift from conventional (offline) shopping to online shopping has become an inevitable phenomenon in this modern era. Online shopping has now become an essential part of everyday life and continues to evolve in line with technological advances and changing lifestyles. With the existence of e-commerce platforms, it is now easier for people to shop online. Based on initial observations conducted by researchers, there are several phenomena that occur with Skintific products based on online customer reviews. Taken from several TikTok accounts of Skintific product users, they left negative comments about the product such as consumer problems reporting the emergence of skin problems such as pimples, acne, or irritation after using Skintific products. One content creator even said that his face became acne after two uses, and this problem worsened with continued use. In addition, the rise of endorsements by celebrities has also raised concerns among consumers regarding the authenticity of testimonials and product safety. There are cases where

consumers complained of skin problems such as acne after using Skintific products. On e-commerce platforms and online stores, fake Skintific products are circulating at prices much cheaper than the original product.

Celebrity endorsement and online customer reviews have a strong relationship in influencing purchasing decisions, where both share a role in convincing potential consumers. Celebrity endorsements act as an early promotional tool, serving to attract attention and create an exclusive product image through visual appeal to the public. The presence of celebrities with ideal skin conditions can trigger the emotional aspect of consumers, resulting in initial interest and purchase intention to try Skintific products. Once consumer interest in purchasing is aroused, consumers require rational validation through online customer reviews before making a final decision. Online reviews from fellow real users serve as objective social proof that provides in-depth information about the product's texture, effectiveness, and side effects on various skin types. This synergy between the emotional appeal of celebrities and the factual confirmation of online reviews is what effectively erodes doubts, reduces the perception of purchase risk, and ultimately strengthens consumers' purchasing decisions. Based on several previous studies, inconsistencies were found in the research results, such as in the study (Graciafernandy & Almayani, 2023; Utami et al., 2024) it was found that *online customer reviews* has a positive impact on *buying decision*. However, this is not in line with the results of the research conducted (Lestari et al., 2023; Utami et al., 2024), which is precisely *online customer reviews* has no effect on *buying decision*. Not all consumers consider reviews from other customers as a determining factor in buying decisions. Likewise on *celebrity endorse* to *buying decision*, there is inconsistency between previous research. There is a positive and significant influence between *celebrity endorse* with *buying decisions* such as research conducted by (Layyina et al., 2025; Al Rahmawati, 2022), the research is inconsistent with research conducted by (Alvianingsih & Fuadi, 2025; Pudyaningsih et al., 2022) who said that *celebrity endorse* has a negative and insignificant impact on *buying decision*. If a celebrity endorser is involved in negative press or a scandal, this can diminish the credibility of the product they are promoting.

METHOD

This study employed associative and quantitative methods to explore the relationships between variables. The associative method was used to understand the influence of one variable on another, while the quantitative approach provided a solid foundation for numerical data analysis. The study was conducted in Medan. Sample selection was based on the Lemeshow formula, resulting in a total of 96 respondents who met certain criteria, such as being over 20 years old and having previously purchased Skintific products. Data were collected through three techniques: questionnaires, interviews, and documentation. The questionnaire used a Likert scale to explore respondents' perceptions, while the interviews provided deeper insights into respondents' experiences and opinions. For data analysis, descriptive and inferential statistical techniques were used, with a focus on Structural Equation Modeling based on Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS). The analysis included evaluation of the measurement model and the structural model, which aimed to test validity, reliability, and relationships between variables. The results of this study are expected to contribute to a deeper understanding of the relationship between content marketing, influencer marketing, customer satisfaction, and purchasing decisions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Structural Model Analysis (Inner Model)

Structural model analysis uses 3 tests, including: (1) R-Square; (2) F-Square; (3) Hypothesis Test: The following are the test results:

R-Square R-Square Table

	<i>R Square</i>	<i>R Square Adjusted</i>
<i>online customer reviews</i>	0.386	0.373
<i>buying decision</i>	0.738	0.730

Source: SmartPLS 3 Data Processing Results (2026)

The conclusion of the R-square value test in Table 4.12 above is as follows: R-Square Adjusted path model I = 0.730 means the ability of the online customer review and celebrity endorser variables in explaining the buying decision variable is 73%, thus the model is classified as moderate. R-Square Adjusted path model II = 0.373 means the ability of the online customer review and celebrity endorser variables in explaining customer satisfaction is 37.3%, thus the model is classified as weak.

F-Square F-Square Table

	<i>Customer Satisfaction</i>	<i>Buying Decision</i>
<i>Celebrity Endorser</i>	0.148	0.005
<i>Customer Satisfaction</i>		0.949
<i>Online Customer Review</i>	0.229	0.228

Source: SmartPLS 3 Data Processing Results (2026)

The conclusion of the F-Square value can be seen in the table above as follows:

- 1) X1 (*online customer reviews*) on Y (*buying decision*) has a value = 0.228, so the effect of the exogenous variable on the endogenous variable is moderate.
- 2) X2 (*celebrity endorser*) on Y (*buying decision*) has a value = 0.005, so the effect of the exogenous variable on the endogenous variable is small.
- 3) X1 (*online customer reviews*) on Z (*customer satisfaction*) has a value = 0.229, so the effect of the exogenous variable on the mediator is moderate
- 4) X2 (*Celebrity endorser*) on Z (*customer satisfaction*) has a value = 0.148, so the exogenous variable has a small effect on the mediator
- 5) Z (*Customer satisfaction*) on Y (*buying decision*) has a value = 0.949, so the mediator variable has a large effect on endogeneity.

Hypothesis Testing

This test is used to determine the path coefficients of the structural model. The goal is to test the significance of all relationships or hypotheses.

Direct Effect(Direct Impact)

Path Coefficient Table

	<i>Original Sample (O)</i>	<i>Sample Mean (M)</i>	<i>Standard Deviation (STDEV)</i>	<i>T Statistics (O/STDEV)</i>	<i>P Values</i>
<i>Celebrity Endorser → Customer Satisfaction</i>	0.330	0.354	0.117	2,807	0.005
<i>Celebrity Endorser → Buying Decision</i>	0.044	0.053	0.072	0.609	0.543
<i>Customer Satisfaction → Buying Decision</i>	0.636	0.624	0.120	5,289	0,000
<i>Online Customer Review → Customer Satisfaction</i>	0.410	0.417	0.124	3,313	0.001
<i>Online Customer Review → Buying Decision</i>	0.297	0.310	0.133	2,231	0.026

Source: SmartPLS 3 Data Processing Results (2026)

The path coefficients in Table 4.14 show that all path coefficient values are positive (seen in TStatistic(|O/STDEV|)), including:

- a) X1 against Y: Tstatistics(|O/STDEV|) value = 2.231 and P-Value = 0.026 < 0.05, meaning that the influence of X1 (online customer review) on Z (*buying decision*) is positive and significant.
- b) X2 on Y: Tstatistics(|O/STDEV|) value = 0.609 and P-Value = 0.543 > 0.05, meaning that there is no influence of X2 (celebrity endorser) on Y (*buying decision*).
- c) X1 against Z: Tstatistics(|O/STDEV|) value = 3.313 and P-Value = 0.001 < 0.05, meaning that the influence of X1 (online customer review) on Z (*customer satisfaction*) is positive and significant.
- d) X2 against Z: Tstatistics(|O/STDEV|) value = 2.807 and P-Value = 0.005 < 0.05 means, the influence of X2 (celebrity endorser) on Z (*customer satisfaction*) is positive and significant.
- e) Z against Y: Tstatistics(|O/STDEV|) value = 5.289 and P-Values = 0.000 < 0.05, meaning, the influence of Z (*customer satisfaction*) to Y (*buying decision*) is positive and significant.

Indirect Effect(Indirect Influence)

The purpose of indirect effect analysis is to test the hypothesis of the indirect influence of an influencing variable (exogenous) on an influenced

variable (endogenous) which is mediated by an intervening variable (mediator variable). (Juliandi, 2018). The criteria for determining indirect effects are:

- a) If the P-value is < 0.05 , it is significant, meaning the mediator variable (Z/customer satisfaction) mediates the influence of the exogenous variables (X/online customer reviews and celebrity endorsers) on the endogenous variable (Y/buying decision). In other words, the effect is indirect.
- b) If the P-value > 0.05 , then it is not significant, meaning the mediator variable (Z/customer satisfaction) does not mediate the influence of an exogenous variable (X/online customer review and celebrity endorser) on an endogenous variable (Y/buying decision). In other words, the effect is direct.

Table 4.15. Indirect Effect

	<i>Original Sample (O)</i>	<i>Sample Mean (M)</i>	<i>Standard Deviation (STDEV)</i>	<i>T Statistics (O/STDEV)</i>	<i>P Values</i>
<i>Celebrity Endorser → Customer Satisfaction → Buying Decision</i>	0.210	0.224	0.092	2,289	0.023
<i>Online Customer Review → Customer Satisfaction → Buying Decision</i>	0.261	0.258	0.086	3,050	0.002

Source: SmartPLS 3 Data Processing Results (2026)

Thus, it can be concluded that the indirect effect value shown in table 4.15 is:

- a) Indirect influence of online customer reviews (X1) → customer satisfaction (Z) → buying decision (Y) the TStatistics(|O/STDEV|) value is 3.050, with P-Values $0.002 < 0.05$ (significant), then Z (customer Satisfaction) mediates the influence of X (online customer review) on Y (buying decision).
- b) Indirect influence of celebrity endorser (X1) → customer satisfaction (Z) → buying decision (Y) TStatistics(|O/STDEV|) value is 2.289, with P-Values $0.023 < 0.05$ (significant), then Z (customer satisfaction) mediates the influence of X (online customer review) on Y (buying decision).

Discussion

The Influence of Online Customer Reviews on Buying Decisions

Based on the results of testing the influence of online customer reviews on buying decisions, X1 on Y with a Tstatistics value (|O/STDEV|) = 2.231 and a P-Value of 0.026 with a significance level of $0.026 < 0.05$, from these results it can be concluded that there is a significant influence between online customer reviews on buying decisions for Skintific

skincare products in Medan City. *Online customer review* has a relationship with online buying decisions because reviews and ratings are one of the many factors that influence the emergence of online consumers, consumers will be more likely to shop in online markets because it can foster these decisions. With reviews, trust, attitudes, behavior, and most importantly, the desire or interest to buy. The results of the study Ardianti & Widiartanto, (2019), shows that online customer reviews have a significant impact on buying decisions through Shopee. Rakhma et al., (2021), stated that online customer reviews have a partial positive impact on purchasing choices on the Shopee marketplace platform.

Based on research Fauzi & Lina, (2021) Online customer reviews are a type of electronic word of mouth (eWOM) communication—digital content posted by internet users to various platforms or websites they own. Online customer reviews are not only an important reference when consumers make purchasing decisions, but also serve as a feedback platform and a useful recommendation system on online shopping platforms. This is supported by research. (Mahendra & Edastama, 2022; Rahman et al., 2022a) which obtained results that the online customer review variable significantly influences buying decisions.

The Influence of Celebrity Endorsers on Buying Decisions

Based on the results of testing the influence of celebrity endorsers on buying decisions, X_2 on Y with a T statistics value ($|O/STDEV|$) = 0.609 and P -Value 0.543 with a significance level of $0.543 > 0.05$ from these results it can be concluded that there is no influence between celebrity endorsers on buying decisions for Skintific products in Medan City. This means that the presence of celebrities as supporters or promoters of products does not directly determine buying decisions. Consumers do not only depend on public figures in deciding to buy products. The presence of a celebrity as an endorser is considered an effective method in promoting a product, because the opinion of a famous figure is usually more capable of attracting the interest of many people. (Maro'ah & Rosyidi, 2024). In addition to attracting attention, a celebrity also needs to have the skills, insight, experience, and expertise to understand the product or service they are promoting. Rahman et al., (2022) Besides needing to attract attention, a celebrity must also have the ability, including understanding, experience, and skills to understand the product or service they are advertising.

This is not in line with the research conducted Janah et al., (2024), which states that the celebrity endorser factor has a positive and significant impact on the decision to purchase, proving that the more famous a celebrity is, the greater their influence in motivating consumers' purchasing choices. Research conducted by Putra & Ningrum, (2019) stated that celebrity endorsers have a positive and significant influence on buying decisions.

The Influence of Online Customer Reviews on Customer Satisfaction

Based on the results of testing the influence of online customer reviews on customer satisfaction, X_2 on Z with a T statistics value ($|O/STDEV|$) = 3.313 and P Values 0.001 with a significance level of $0.001 < 0.05$ from these results it can be concluded that there is a significant influence between online customer reviews on customer satisfaction of Skintific products in Medan City. *Online customer review* is an evaluation or comment given by consumers regarding their experience after using a product (Sukirman & Kumalasari, 2023) In the e-commerce realm, these reviews serve to help potential buyers overcome doubts and serve as a valuable evaluation tool for sellers. When a brand successfully delivers a quality product that generates positive reviews, this can significantly increase consumer trust and lead to high levels of customer satisfaction. (Zubiaga et al.,

2025) Positive and informative reviews tend to increase customer trust in the product or service being offered. Conversely, negative reviews can decrease that level of trust. (Alow et al., 2024).

Study Fahrani et al., (2025), shows that online customer reviews have a positive and significant influence on customer satisfaction. The better the quality and quantity of positive reviews left by previous customers, the higher the level of satisfaction felt by new customers.. When the product received matches the description in the review, there is a confirmation of expectations which psychologically validates the buying decision and eliminates post-shopping anxiety. (Pratiwi et al., 2023).

The Influence of Celebrity Endorsers on Customer Satisfaction

Based on the results of testing the influence of celebrity endorsers on customer satisfaction, X2 on Z with a value of Tstatistics ($|O/STDEV|$) = 2.807 and PValues 0.005 with a significance level of $0.005 < 0.05$ from these results it can be concluded that there is a significant influence between celebrity endorsers on customer satisfaction of Skintific products in Medan City. A celebrity endorser is a celebrity who uses his or her fame and credibility to promote a product or brand to the public. (Rahmawati et al., 2024) In marketing strategies, celebrities are chosen because of their attractiveness, recognized expertise, and trustworthiness in the eyes of consumers. Their presence in advertisements or brand campaigns aims to create a positive impression and increase the product's appeal.

The presence of celebrity endorsers influences customer satisfaction through the process of shaping perceptions and expectations. When a trusted and liked celebrity endorses a product, consumers tend to have positive expectations about its quality. If the desired product meets or exceeds the endorser's expectations, customer satisfaction will increase. (Aradhea et al., 2025a).

The Influence of Customer Satisfaction on Buying Decisions

Based on the results of testing the influence of customer satisfaction on buying decisions, Z on Y with a Tstatistics value ($|O/STDEV|$) = 5.289 and PValues 0.000 with a significance level of $0.000 < 0.05$ from these results it can be concluded that there is a significant influence between customer satisfaction on buying decisions for Skintific products in Medan City. *Customer satisfaction* has an important role in forming buying decisions (Fahrani et al., 2025) This level of satisfaction serves as a post-purchase evaluation that directly determines whether a consumer will repeat a transaction or switch to a competitor in the future. created when the performance of a product or service successfully meets or even exceeds consumer expectations (Cahyani et al., 2024) When these expectations are met, consumers will feel that the risk they took in their previous purchase was minimal. This fosters a high level of confidence, so they will not hesitate to make that product or brand their first choice in the future. Disappointed customers may even spread negative reviews, which can directly derail the buying decisions of other potential customers. (Pramesti & Abdillah, 2024).

Customer trust in something arises because customers begin to be stimulated by their needs and become increasingly interested in seeking information on how to obtain what they want. The information sources consumers rely on and their strong influence on their buying decisions are a primary focus of marketing. This aligns with research conducted by Asdilvira, (2024), stated that customer satisfaction has a significant and positive influence on buying decisions. This is in accordance with research conducted by Zendrato et al., (2025), with the results of the customer satisfaction variable having a significant influence on buying decisions.

The Influence of Online Customer Reviews on Buying Decisions Mediated by Customer Satisfaction

Based on the results of testing the influence of online customer reviews on buying decisions mediated by customer satisfaction, X1 on Y is mediated by Z with a Tstatistics ($|O/STDEV|$) value = 3.050 and a P-Value of 0.002 with a significance level of $0.002 > 0.05$. From these results, it can be concluded that customer satisfaction mediates the influence of online customer reviews on buying decisions for Skintific products in Medan City. *Online customer reviews* has a positive and significant influence on buying decisions that are bridged or mediated by customer satisfaction (Arantika et al., 2025). Online reviews act as a crucial source of information that shapes consumers' initial expectations before making a purchase. When positive reviews from previous buyers prove accurate after receiving the product, consumers experience a high level of satisfaction, which then encourages them to make repeat purchases in the future. *Customer satisfaction* acts as a partial or full mediating variable that strengthens the impact of reviews on purchasing behavior. Without perceived or expected satisfaction by consumers, even good reviews will not be strong enough to maintain long-term loyalty. (Camilleri & Filieri, 2023). Therefore, online reviews converted into real satisfaction are a key combination that effectively drives the consumer's final decision to continue purchasing the product.

This finding is in line with research Rismawati et al., (2024) which states that when consumers shop online, they face a high risk of uncertainty. When satisfaction is positioned as a mediating variable, this explains why good reviews or celebrity endorsements can successfully generate sales. Consumer satisfaction effectively mitigates the fear of making the wrong purchase, enabling consumers to make informed purchasing decisions.

The Influence of Celebrity Endorsers on Buying Decisions Mediated by Customer Satisfaction

Based on the results of testing the influence of celebrity endorsers on buying decisions mediated by customer satisfaction, X2 on Y is mediated by Z with a value of Tstatistics ($|O/STDEV|$) = 2.289 and P-Value 0.023 with a significance level of $0.023 > 0.05$ from these results it can be concluded that customer satisfaction mediates the influence of celebrity endorsers on buying decisions for Skintific products in Medan City. *Celebrity endorser* While influencers play a strategic role in triggering emotional attachment and strong initial appeal, their ultimate impact on buying decisions is heavily influenced by customer satisfaction. Popular and credible public figures are able to attract mass attention, build a positive image, and create high expectations for a product. (Aradhea et al., 2025) When consumers decide to try a product based on a celebrity's recommendation and are satisfied that the product's quality actually matches the advertised value, this satisfaction immediately cements the consumer's confidence to make repeat purchases.

In this study, customer satisfaction serves as a mediating variable that distills the effects of popularity into substantial purchasing decisions. Promotions from well-known celebrities often trigger high expectations in consumers' minds, which simultaneously increases the risk of disappointment if the product does not meet standards. When satisfaction is achieved after product consumption, this variable acts as an emotional bridge that converts admiration for the celebrity into trust in the brand, thus smoothing the buying decision process without post-purchase hesitation. (Sudirjo et al., 2024). This research is in line with research conducted (Carolin, 2019), which states a positive and significant influence between celebrity endorsements on buying decisions, with customer satisfaction acting as a mediator. Without customer satisfaction as a mediator, the influence of celebrity endorsements will only stop at the stage of building brand awareness or a one-time impulse

purchase. Consumer dissatisfaction with the actual product's performance will sever the relationship and render the expensive promotion ineffective in the long run.

CONCLUSION

Based on data obtained in a study on the role of customer satisfaction in mediating the influence of online customer reviews and celebrity endorsers on purchasing decisions, the 96 respondents in this study were analyzed and the following conclusions were drawn: *Online customer reviews* significantly influences consumers' purchasing decisions for Skintific products in Medan. This means that the more positive reviews consumers leave on social media and marketplaces, the more likely they are to purchase Skintific products. Online reviews are a key consideration before making a purchase. *Celebrity endorser* did not influence the purchasing decisions of Skintific products among consumers in Medan City. This means that the presence of celebrities as endorsers or promoters of the product does not directly influence purchasing decisions. Consumers do not rely solely on public figures when deciding to purchase a product. *Online customer reviews* has a significant influence on customer satisfaction of Skintific products among consumers in Medan City, meaning that the more positive, honest, and informative reviews consumers receive, the more their level of trust in Skintific products will increase. *Celebrity endorser* has a significant influence on customer satisfaction of Skintific products among consumers in Medan City, meaning that the use of celebrities who have credibility, attractiveness, and a good reputation can increase consumer trust in Skintific products. *Customer satisfaction* has a significant influence on the buying decision of Skintific products for consumers in Medan City, meaning that the higher the level of consumer trust in the quality, safety, and benefits of the product, the greater the likelihood of them making a purchase. *Online customer reviews* significantly influence buying decisions through customer satisfaction of Skintific products on consumers in Medan City, meaning that online reviews not only influence buying decisions directly, but also indirectly by increasing consumer trust before finally deciding to buy. *Celebrity endorsers* significantly influence buying decisions through customer satisfaction of Skintific products among consumers in Medan City, meaning that the presence of celebrities with credibility, attractiveness, and a good reputation can increase consumer trust first, which then encourages buying decisions. Thus, customer satisfaction acts as a mediating variable that strengthens the influence of celebrity endorsers on buying decisions.

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