

HOW INFLUENCERS AND ONLINE CUSTOMER REVIEWS SHAPE REPURCHASE INTENTION IN FAST-FOOD MSMES: THE MEDIATING ROLE OF CUSTOMER TRUST AND THE MODERATING ROLE OF PRODUCT INVOLVEMENT

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Abstract

Increasingly intense competition in the micro, small, and medium-sized food and beverage (MSME) sector requires businesses to understand the mechanisms that encourage customers to make repeat purchases. This study analyzes the influence of influencers and online customer reviews on repurchase intention, both directly and through customer trust, and examines the role of product involvement in moderating the relationship between influencers and repurchase intention. The research conceptual framework was developed based on Stimulus–Organism–Response Theory, which positions influencers and online customer reviews as stimuli, customer trust as an internal psychological state, and repurchase intention as a behavioral response. The study used a quantitative explanatory design with a cross-sectional approach. Data were collected through questionnaires from 210 customers of MSMEs in the fast food F&B sector in Malang City selected using purposive sampling. Analysis was conducted through partial least squares structural equation modeling using SmartPLS 4.0. The results showed that influencers and online customer reviews have a positive and significant effect on customer trust. Customer trust also has a positive effect on repurchase intention. Influencers did not have a significant direct influence on repurchase intention, while online customer reviews showed a positive influence with significance at the limit of statistical acceptance. Customer trust mediated the influence of influencers and online customer reviews on repurchase intention. Product involvement was not shown to moderate the relationship between influencers and repurchase intention. These findings suggest that the effectiveness of influencer communication in driving repeat purchases depends primarily on their ability to build trust in MSMEs. Customer reviews serve a dual function as a source of evaluative information and as a basis for forming consumer beliefs. Practical implications emphasize the importance of consistent product quality, communication transparency, review authenticity, and selecting influencers who are credible and relevant to the target market.

Keywords: influencer; online customer reviews; customer trust; repurchase intention; product involvement; MSME F&B fast food

Introduction

Digitalization has reconfigured how consumers search for information, assess market offerings, and sustain relationships with small businesses. This transformation is particularly consequential for food and beverage (F&B) micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs), whose competitive position increasingly depends on digital visibility as well as product quality, price, and prior consumption experience. Indonesia hosts approximately 6.2 million food and beverage business units, creating extensive consumer choice while intensifying rivalry among sellers (KEMENKEU, 2025). Malang City provides a salient setting because its MSME population reached approximately 85,200 units in 2023, with culinary businesses occupying a prominent share of local entrepreneurial activity (Gumilang, 2025). Fast food deserves specific attention within this market because its rapid preparation, accessibility, and convenience align closely with urban lifestyles (Kotler, 2016; Khoirunnisa & Sari, 2025).

Malang's identity as an education city further shapes this competitive landscape. A large and mobile student population creates sustained demand for affordable, practical, and quickly served meals, while widespread social-

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media use exposes young consumers to promotional content, peer evaluations, ratings, and digital recommendations before purchasing (Perdana, 2023; Sabani, 2024). Under such conditions, business continuity cannot rely solely on attracting first-time buyers. It also requires the capacity to stimulate repurchase intention, understood as a consumer's inclination to purchase the same product or service again after evaluating previous experience (Choi et al., 2019). In digital markets, this inclination is informed by personal consumption, online word of mouth, influencer recommendations, and user-generated evaluations (Fan et al., 2025; Liao et al., 2017; Wijarnoko et al., 2023).

Influencers and online customer reviews constitute distinct informational cues within this decision process. Influencers build audiences through social media and shape responses through message informativeness, attractiveness, similarity, expertise, and trustworthiness rather than follower volume alone (Lou & Yuan, 2019). Their persuasive capacity depends on whether consumers regard the source as competent, sincere, and congruent with the promoted product. Empirical evidence indicates that influencer credibility can foster purchase-related responses through customer trust, suggesting that exposure alone may be insufficient when the recommendation fails to establish confidence in the offering (Aryanzah et al., 2026). Online customer reviews operate differently because they communicate evaluations grounded in users' consumption experiences. Their relevance, consistency, argument quality, recency, and perceived authenticity may reduce uncertainty and strengthen trust in both the product and seller (Baima et al., 2022). Trust can subsequently convert review information into repurchase intention by lowering perceived risk and reinforcing expectations of reliable performance (Rosada & Setiawan, 2025).

Consumer reactions to these digital cues may also vary according to product involvement. This construct reflects the personal relevance and importance attached to a product, influencing attention, information search, alternative evaluation, and decision effort (Asyhari et al., 2024). Greater involvement encourages critical comparison across information sources, whereas limited involvement may increase reliance on readily observable cues such as influencer popularity, ratings, or review volume (Cheung, 2024). Prior findings remain inconclusive. Digital information and customer reviews have been associated with stronger trust and repeat-purchase tendencies (Anggraeni & Albari, 2024; Ayuwandani et al., 2024), while customer trust has repeatedly emerged as a central explanatory mechanism (Rahanatha, 2025). Other evidence shows no significant direct effect of online reviews on purchase intention once trust is considered (Azis et al., 2025), and influencer effectiveness may depend on credibility, product congruence, and audience involvement (Anggraeni, 2024).

The unresolved issue concerns both mechanisms and boundary conditions. Some studies position trust as a mediator linking digital stimuli to repurchase intention (Fitri et al., 2025; Panggang & Berlianto, 2022; Yuliani et al., 2025), whereas others treat it as a moderator and report inconsistent support (Setiawan & Chairunisa, 2025; Dwidienawati et al., 2020). Existing research also commonly examines marketplaces, heterogeneous product categories, or initial purchase intention, leaving limited insight into repeated consumption of fast food offered by local MSMEs. Drawing on Stimulus–Organism–Response theory, this study conceptualizes influencers and online customer reviews as external stimuli, customer trust as the internal organismic state, and repurchase intention as the behavioral response (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974). It further examines product involvement as a moderator of the influencer–repurchase intention relationship among customers of fast-food F&B MSMEs in Malang City.

The proposed model separates commercially curated influencer communication from experience-based customer reviews instead of subsuming both under a broad electronic word-of-mouth construct. It evaluates their direct effects on repurchase intention, their indirect pathways through customer trust, and the conditional role of product involvement in the influencer pathway. This configuration addresses the empirical inconsistency surrounding trust, distinguishes repeat purchasing from initial purchasing interest, and locates the analysis within a highly competitive local fast-food context.

Theoretical Basis

Stimulus–Organism–Response (SOR) theory provides the principal framework for explaining how environmental cues are converted into consumer behavior. The model distinguishes stimulus, referring to externally received information; organism, representing the cognitive and affective states through which such information is interpreted; and response, denoting the attitudinal or behavioral tendency produced after internal evaluation (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974). Its central premise rejects a mechanically direct relationship between exposure and action. Consumers assign meaning to market signals, assess their credibility and relevance, and form internal judgments before developing a behavioral intention. Digital evidence supports this sequence, as electronic word-of-mouth valence can shape brand attitudes and perceived quality before influencing engagement and purchase intention (Haq et al., 2024).

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Within the present model, influencers and online customer reviews constitute two analytically distinct stimuli. An influencer is a social-media content creator whose persuasive capacity arises from expertise, informational value, trustworthiness, attractiveness, and perceived similarity to followers (Lou & Yuan, 2019). This source is assessed through trustworthiness, reputation, and credibility because persuasive reach alone does not establish informational legitimacy (Ang & Cheng, 2008). Online customer reviews originate from consumers' reported experiences and provide cues concerning product performance, service, price, and transaction quality. Their diagnostic value depends on reviewer expertise, product ranking, argument quality, website reputation, review volume, user engagement, recency, and posting frequency (Wang et al., 2015). Information quality, including relevance, completeness, accuracy, timeliness, and balance, further determines whether electronic word of mouth becomes useful in product evaluation (Wang et al., 2020).

Customer trust represents the organismic state through which both stimuli acquire behavioral meaning. Trust reflects a consumer's willingness to accept vulnerability based on expectations that the seller possesses the ability, benevolence, and integrity required to fulfill valued obligations (Mayer et al., 1995). In a fast-food MSME setting, this internal judgment concerns competence in delivering consistent products, concern for customer welfare, and alignment between promises and actual consumption experiences. Influencer credibility can precede trust formation, while trust subsequently relates to loyalty, purchasing intention, and recommendation behavior (Alcántara-Pilar et al., 2024). It is not a permanent disposition; repeated positive experience sustains it, whereas service failures and inconsistent conduct may erode it (Božič et al., 2020).

Repurchase intention is positioned as the response because it expresses a consumer's readiness to buy again after evaluating previous transactions. It incorporates anticipated value, service experience, satisfaction, and the expected consequences of future consumption (Sharma et al., 2024; Tran et al., 2025). The construct also captures continued purchasing after consumers consider reviews, product assessments, and other relevant information (Gemala et al., 2026). Product involvement functions as a boundary condition rather than a core SOR component. It reflects the cognitive and affective relevance attached to a product, influencing attention, search intensity, and evaluative effort (Drossos et al., 2014). Its measurement covers importance, interest, relevance, attention, and personal value (Lin, 2008), allowing the influencer–repurchase relationship to vary across levels of consumer engagement.

Methodology

This study adopted a cross-sectional quantitative design combining descriptive analysis with explanatory research to examine the structural relationships among influencer credibility, online customer reviews, customer trust, repurchase intention, and product involvement. Quantitative inquiry was selected because theoretically specified constructs can be translated into numerical measures and tested statistics (Ghanad, 2023). Guided by Stimulus–Organism–Response theory (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974), the model positions influencer and online customer reviews as exogenous stimuli, customer trust as the mediating organismic state, repurchase intention as the principal endogenous response, and product involvement as a moderator of the influencer–repurchase intention relationship. Every construct was specified reflectively. The target population comprised customers of fast-food F&B MSMEs in Malang City, for whom no complete sampling frame was available. Non-probability purposive sampling was substantially employed. Eligible participants were at least 18 years old, had purchased fast-food products from local MSMEs on at least two occasions, had encountered influencer promotions, had accessed or interacted with online customer reviews, actively used relevant digital platforms, and completed the questionnaire according to their purchasing experience. A preliminary survey involving 35 individuals indicated that 86% met these requirements. Using a 95% confidence level, a 5% margin of error, and the estimated population proportion, the minimum sample was 186 respondents, as confirmed through Sample Size Calculator (Calculator.net, 2025). The final dataset consisted of 210 qualified participants.

Data were collected through a closed-ended online questionnaire distributed via Google Forms, WhatsApp, and other relevant social-media channels. Fifty statements operationalized 22 reflective indicators and were evaluated on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1, “strongly disagree,” to 5, “strongly agree” (Joshi et al., 2015). Influencers comprise trustworthiness, reputation, and credibility (Ang & Cheng, 2008); online customer reviews covered reviewer expertise, product ranking, argument quality, website reputation, review volume, user engagement, and review timing and frequency (Wang et al., 2015). Customer trust captures competence, benevolence, and integrity (Mayer et al., 1995). Repurchase intention represented transactional, referential, preferential, and action (Kotler & Keller, 2012), whereas product involvement measured importance, interest, relevance, attention, and personal value (Lin, 2008). Before the principal survey, the instrument was piloted with 35 conveniently selected respondents. Item validity was examined to ensure correspondence between each statement and its intended construct (Guilford, 1950),

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while internal consistency was assessed through reliability testing. Primary data originates from respondent self-reports, whereas secondary information was obtained from books, scholarly articles, and related written sources; this distinction follows the classification of quantitative research data described by Creswell (2009).

Data analysis combined descriptive statistics with PLS-SEM using SmartPLS 4.0.9.9. Measurement-model evaluation examined outer loadings, average variance extracted, cross-loadings, the Fornell–Larcker criterion, Cronbach's alpha, and composite reliability in accordance with Hair et al. (2019). Structural assessment covered adjusted R^2 , f^2 , direct paths, specific indirect effects, and the influencer $\times$ product involvement interaction through bootstrapping. Harman's single-factor test, supported by KMO and Bartlett diagnostics, was applied to assess potential common method bias associated with the single-source, self-report design.

4. Results

4.1 Respondent Characteristics

The final analytical sample comprised 210 customers of fast-food food and beverage (F&B) micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in Malang City. Male participants constituted 56.2% of the sample, while female respondents represented 43.8%. The age distribution was strongly concentrated among younger consumers. Participants aged 18–22 years accounted for 57.1%, followed by those aged 23–28 years at 41.4%. Only three respondents were older than 28 years, indicating that the empirical observations primarily represented young consumers who were familiar with digital platforms and fast-food consumption.

Educational attainment was concentrated at the senior high school or vocational school level, representing 62.9% of the respondents. Bachelor's degree holders accounted for 25.2%, while the remaining participants had completed junior high school, diploma, master's, or doctoral education. This educational profile is consistent with Malang City's position as an educational center populated by students and young adults.

All respondents fulfilled the behavioral screening requirements. Each participant had encountered a promotion or recommendation delivered by an influencer, read online customer reviews on digital platforms, actively used social media or e-commerce, and completed at least one repeat purchase of an F&B product in Malang City. These criteria ensured that the collected responses were grounded in actual exposure to digital marketing information and prior consumption experience.

Table 1. Respondent Characteristics

Characteristic	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	118	56.2%
	Female	92	43.8%
Age	18–22 years	120	57.1%
	23–28 years	87	41.4%
	29–34 years	1	0.5%
	35–39 years	0	0.0%
	Above 39 years	2	1.0%
Education	Primary school	0	0.0%
	Junior high school	8	3.8%
	Senior high/vocational school	132	62.9%
	Diploma	7	3.3%
	Bachelor's degree	53	25.2%
	Master's degree	9	4.3%
	Doctoral degree	1	0.5%
Screening criteria	Had seen an influencer promotion or recommendation	210	100.0%
	Had to read online customer reviews	210	100.0%
	Actively used social media or e-commerce	210	100.0%
	Had repurchased an F&B product at least once	210	100.0%

Note. .

4.2 Descriptive Statistics

4.2.1 Influencers

Respondents expressed a favorable perception of influencers, as indicated by a grand mean of 3.96 and an average standard deviation of 0.95. Reputation emerged as the most highly evaluated aspect. The statement proposing

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that an influencer's reputation strengthens the value of a recommendation obtained the highest mean of 4.20. Experience with promoted products followed at 4.03, while general public reputation reached 4.01.

Perceived honesty obtained the lowest mean of 3.68. This distribution indicates that consumers are differentiated between public reputation and informational sincerity. A well-known digital figure may enhance product visibility and attract audience attention, yet reputational strength does not necessarily eliminate reservations concerning promotional objectivity. Credibility and relevance in supporting purchasing decisions also received a comparatively moderate evaluation, producing a mean of 3.85.

Table 2. Descriptive Distribution of Influencers

Code	Item	SA, n (%)	A, n (%)	N, n (%)	D, n (%)	SD, n (%)	Mean	Elementary School
IF1	Influencers provide honest information about products or services.	43 (20.5)	87 (41.4)	60 (28.6)	10 (4.8)	10 (4.8)	3.68	1.01
IF2	Influencers can be trusted when recommending products.	69 (32.9)	83 (39.5)	41 (19.5)	16 (7.6)	1 (0.5)	3.97	0.94
IF3	Influencers possess a favorable public reputation.	77 (36.7)	71 (33.8)	51 (24.3)	9 (4.3)	2 (1.0)	4.01	0.93
IF4	An influencer's reputation strengthens the value of the recommendation.	93 (44.3)	76 (36.2)	31 (14.8)	9 (4.3)	1 (0.5)	4.20	0.88
IF5	Influencers have actual experience with the products they recommend.	84 (40.0)	60 (28.6)	55 (26.2)	10 (4.8)	1 (0.5)	4.03	0.95
IF6	Influencer opinions are relevant and credible for purchase decisions.	59 (28.1)	81 (38.6)	55 (26.2)	9 (4.3)	6 (2.9)	3.85	0.98
	Grand mean						3.96	0.95

Note. SA = strongly agree; A = agree; N = neutral; D = disagree; SD = strongly disagree.

4.2.2 Online Customer Reviews

Online customer reviews received the highest construct-level assessment, with a grand mean of 4.12 and an average standard deviation of 0.94. Product ranking, review volume, argument quality, interaction among users, and information recency were assessed particularly favorably. Interest in products carrying high star ratings and confidence generated by a larger number of reviews produced identical means of 4.18.

The lowest evaluation concerned the reviewer's depth of knowledge, which obtained a mean of 3.87. Respondents appeared to rely more heavily on observable digital signals than on assumptions regarding an individual reviewer's expertise. Ratings, review quantity, evidentiary support, logical presentation, user engagement, and recency served as more accessible indicators for assessing the reliability of online information.

Table 3. Descriptive Distribution of Online Customer Reviews

Code	Item	SA, n (%)	A, n (%)	N, n (%)	D, n (%)	SD, n (%)	Mean	Elementary School
OCR1	Reviewers possess in-depth knowledge of the product reviewed.	64 (30.5)	73 (34.8)	60 (28.6)	8 (3.8)	5 (2.4)	3.87	0.97
OCR2	Reviewers have actual experience using the product.	72 (34.3)	87 (41.4)	37 (17.6)	12 (5.7)	2 (1.0)	4.02	0.91
OCR3	Products with high star ratings are more attractive to purchase.	102 (48.6)	52 (24.8)	49 (23.3)	5 (2.4)	2 (1.0)	4.18	0.93
OCR4	A high product rating reinforces the purchase decision.	84 (40.0)	82 (39.0)	32 (15.2)	11 (5.2)	1 (0.5)	4.13	0.89
OCR5	Highly rated products are perceived as having good quality.	92 (43.8)	66 (31.4)	42 (20.0)	7 (3.3)	3 (1.4)	4.13	0.94

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OCR6	Reviews include evidence or concrete examples supporting their claims.	92 (43.8)	72 (34.3)	35 (16.7)	8 (3.8)	3 (1.4)	4.15	0.93
OCR7	Review information is presented logically and clearly.	97 (46.2)	63 (30.0)	38 (18.1)	11 (5.2)	1 (0.5)	4.16	0.93
OCR8	A well-known website increases confidence in product reviews.	82 (39.0)	75 (35.7)	40 (19.0)	10 (4.8)	3 (1.4)	4.06	0.95
OCR9	Website reputation influences confidence in review accuracy.	91 (43.3)	73 (34.8)	29 (13.8)	15 (7.1)	2 (1.0)	4.12	0.97
OCR10	A greater number of reviews increases confidence in a product.	99 (47.1)	67 (31.9)	30 (14.3)	11 (5.2)	3 (1.4)	4.18	0.96
OCR11	Products receiving numerous reviews inspire greater purchase confidence.	99 (47.1)	59 (28.1)	41 (19.5)	9 (4.3)	2 (1.0)	4.16	0.95
OCR12	Reviews with extensive user interaction are more trustworthy.	90 (42.9)	77 (36.7)	33 (15.7)	9 (4.3)	1 (0.5)	4.17	0.88
OCR13	High user engagement increases confidence in product quality.	87 (41.4)	72 (34.3)	43 (20.5)	6 (2.9)	2 (1.0)	4.12	0.90
OCR14	Recent reviews are more trustworthy.	95 (45.2)	65 (31.0)	36 (17.1)	11 (5.2)	3 (1.4)	4.13	0.97
OCR15	Reviews posted close to the purchase date are more relevant.	98 (46.7)	67 (31.9)	28 (13.3)	14 (6.7)	3 (1.4)	4.16	0.99
Grand mean							4.12	0.94

Note. SA = strongly agree; A = agree; N = neutral; D = disagree; SD = strongly disagree.

4.2.3 Customer Trust

Customer trust produced a grand mean of 4.01 and an average standard deviation of 0.94. The strongest perception concerns the attention given by MSMEs to customer satisfaction and welfare, generating a mean of 4.07. Honesty in customer communication followed at 4.04, while consistency between promises and actual delivery reached 4.02.

The relatively narrow range across the items means shows that trust was formed through the combined evaluation of competence, benevolence, and integrity. Product and service competence obtained the lowest score of 3.96, although the value remained within the favorable category. Ethical conduct displayed the highest standard deviation, suggesting greater diversity in customers' assessments of MSME business practices.

Table 4. Descriptive Distribution of Customer Trust

Code	Item	SA, n (%)	A, n (%)	N, n (%)	D, n (%)	SD, n (%)	Mean	Elementary School
CT1	The MSME can provide high-quality products or services.	66 (31.4)	81 (38.6)	55 (26.2)	4 (1.9)	4 (1.9)	3.96	0.92
CT2	The MSME possesses the expertise and experience required to meet customer needs.	69 (32.9)	84 (40.0)	48 (22.9)	8 (3.8)	1 (0.5)	4.01	0.88
CT3	The MSME cares about customer satisfaction and welfare.	82 (39.0)	73 (34.8)	45 (21.4)	7 (3.3)	3 (1.4)	4.07	0.92
CT4	The MSME acts in customers' interests rather than pursuing profit alone.	72 (34.3)	74 (35.2)	52 (24.8)	11 (5.2)	1 (0.5)	3.98	0.93

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CT5	The MSME communicates honestly with customers.	79 (37.6)	74 (35.2)	45 (21.4)	10 (4.8)	2 (1.0)	4.04	0.94
CT6	The MSME operates according to sound ethical principles.	74 (35.2)	76 (36.2)	43 (20.5)	14 (6.7)	3 (1.4)	3.98	1.00
CT7	The MSME is consistent between its promises and actual delivery.	73 (34.8)	84 (40.0)	38 (18.1)	13 (6.2)	2 (1.0)	4.02	0.96
	Grand mean						4.01	0.94

Note. SA = strongly agree; A = agree; N = neutral; D = disagree; SD = strongly disagree.

4.2.4 Repurchase Intention

Repurchase intention generated a grand mean of 3.97 and an average standard deviation of 0.99. Advocacy-related responses were rated more favorably than exclusive product preference. Willingness to share positive experiences received the highest score of 4.14, followed by readiness to recommend the product to other consumers at 4.06.

The tendency to choose the same MSME product over comparable alternatives obtained the lowest mean of 3.81. Continued preference despite the availability of numerous competing products also remains comparatively moderate at 3.86. Customers were more willing to disseminate favorable experiences than to exhibit exclusive attachments to a single fast-food provider.

Table 5. Descriptive Distribution of Repurchase Intention

Code	Item	SA, n (%)	A, n (%)	N, n (%)	D, n (%)	SD, n (%)	Mean	Elementary School
RI1	I intend to repurchase this MSME F&B product in the future.	73 (34.8)	71 (33.8)	50 (23.8)	9 (4.3)	7 (3.3)	3.92	1.04
RI2	I intend to continue using the product following my previous purchase experience.	76 (36.2)	76 (36.2)	36 (17.1)	20 (9.5)	2 (1.0)	3.97	1.01
RI3	I am willing to recommend this MSME F&B product to others.	82 (39.0)	73 (34.8)	42 (20.0)	12 (5.7)	1 (0.5)	4.06	0.92
RI4	I would advise family members or friends to purchase this product.	72 (34.3)	84 (40.0)	39 (18.6)	14 (6.7)	1 (0.5)	4.01	0.94
RI5	I tend to share positive experiences regarding this product with others.	95 (45.2)	64 (30.5)	38 (18.1)	12 (5.7)	1 (0.5)	4.14	0.93
RI6	I prefer this MSME F&B product to similar alternatives.	63 (30.0)	72 (34.3)	51 (24.3)	19 (9.0)	5 (2.4)	3.81	1.05
RI7	This product is my primary choice when I need a similar offering.	76 (36.2)	67 (31.9)	45 (21.4)	21 (10.0)	1 (0.5)	3.94	1.00
RI8	I continue choosing this product despite the availability of many alternatives.	66 (31.4)	73 (34.8)	49 (23.3)	20 (9.5)	2 (1.0)	3.86	1.01
RI9	I would recommend this product to other people.	80 (38.1)	74 (35.2)	38 (18.1)	15 (7.1)	3 (1.4)	4.02	0.98
	Grand mean						3.97	0.99

Note. SA = strongly agree; A = agree; N = neutral; D = disagree; SD = strongly disagree.

4.2.5 Product Involvement

Product involvement recorded a grand mean of 3.93 and an average standard deviation of 0.98. Attention to influencer reviews or recommendations produced the highest item mean of 4.07. Perceived personal value and congruence with individual preferences each reached 4.01, while continued interest in obtaining product information generated a mean of 3.99.

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General product importance received the lowest mean of 3.74. The empirical pattern separates active information processing from deep personal centrality. Respondents paid attention to promotional and evaluative content, although fast-food products were not consistently perceived as highly consequential to their daily lives.

Table 6. Descriptive Distribution of Product Involvement

Code	Item	SA, n (%)	A, n (%)	N, n (%)	D, n (%)	SD, n (%)	Mean	Elementary School
PI1	The MSME F&B product is important to me.	52 (24.8)	75 (35.7)	63 (30.0)	16 (7.6)	4 (1.9)	3.74	0.99
PI2	The product plays an important role in meeting my needs.	65 (31.0)	73 (34.8)	48 (22.9)	21 (10.0)	3 (1.4)	3.84	1.03
PI3	I am interested in the MSME F&B product I purchase.	68 (32.4)	75 (35.7)	53 (25.2)	12 (5.7)	2 (1.0)	3.93	0.95
PI4	This product attracts my attention more than comparable offerings.	71 (33.8)	64 (30.5)	57 (27.1)	16 (7.6)	2 (1.0)	3.89	0.99
PI5	I am very interested in continuing to obtain information about this product.	77 (36.7)	70 (33.3)	49 (23.3)	12 (5.7)	2 (1.0)	3.99	0.94
PI6	The product attracts my attention compared with similar products.	72 (34.3)	69 (32.9)	50 (23.8)	16 (7.6)	3 (1.4)	3.91	1.00
PI7	The product fits my preferences and tastes.	67 (31.9)	79 (37.6)	47 (22.4)	13 (6.2)	4 (1.9)	3.91	1.00
PI8	I pay attention to information and promotions related to the product.	74 (35.2)	71 (33.8)	46 (21.9)	17 (8.1)	2 (1.0)	3.95	0.98
PI9	I pay attention to influencer reviews or recommendations concerning the product.	82 (39.0)	77 (36.7)	38 (18.1)	10 (4.8)	3 (1.4)	4.07	0.94
PI10	I spend time examining product details before repurchasing.	78 (37.1)	67 (31.9)	49 (23.3)	14 (6.7)	2 (1.0)	3.98	0.96
PI11	The product provides personally important value.	82 (39.0)	66 (31.4)	48 (22.9)	11 (5.2)	3 (1.4)	4.01	0.96
PI12	I experience personal satisfaction when consuming the product.	71 (33.8)	78 (37.1)	45 (21.4)	12 (5.7)	4 (1.9)	3.95	1.00
PI13	The product reflects my personal values or preferences.	81 (38.6)	67 (31.9)	46 (21.9)	14 (6.7)	2 (1.0)	4.01	0.97
	Grand mean						3.93	0.98

Note. SA = strongly agree; A = agree; N = neutral; D = disagree; SD = strongly disagree.

4.3 Common Method Bias Assessment

Common method bias was examined because the predictor, mediator, moderator, and outcome constructs were collected from the same respondents through a single questionnaire during one data-collection period. Harman's single-factor procedure incorporated the 22 manifest indicators simultaneously into an unrotated exploratory factor analysis.

The Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin statistic reached 0.962, indicating highly adequate correlations for factor extraction. Bartlett's test of sphericity was statistically significant, , , confirming that the correlation matrix differed from an identity matrix.

Two factors generated eigenvalues above 1.00. The first factor had an eigenvalue of 13.977 and explained 63.231% of the total variance, while the second accounted for 6.504%. The cumulative proportion reached 69.735%. Since the first factor exceeded the 50% criterion applied in the thesis, the result indicates a substantial possibility of covariance arising from the common measurement procedure.

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Table 7. Harman's Single-Factor Test

Diagnostic Measure	Result
Number of respondents	210
Number of manifest indicators	22
Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin statistics	0.962
Bartlett's approximate chi-square	4,341,791
Degrees of freedom	231
Bartlett's significance	<0.001
Factors with eigenvalues above 1	2
First-factor eigenvalue	13,977
Variance explained by the first factor	63.231%
Variance explained by the second factor	6.504%
Cumulative variance explained	69.735%

4.4 Measurement Model Assessment

The reflective measurement model demonstrated satisfactory convergent validity at the indicator and construct levels. All retained outer loads exceed the recommended threshold of 0.70. Customer trust indicators ranged from 0.875 to 0.940, while influencer loadings extended from 0.845 to 0.883. Online customer review produced coefficients between 0.798 and 0.892, product involvement ranged from 0.888 to 0.974, and repurchase intention generated values between 0.896 and 0.934.

Average variance extracted values exceeded the minimum criterion of 0.50 for every latent construct (Hair et al., 2019). Customer trust attained an AVE of 0.826, influencer reached 0.749, online customer review recorded 0.739, product involvement produced 0.863, and repurchase intention reached 0.823. Each latent variable explains more than half of the variance contained in its assigned indicators. Internal consistency was also high. Cronbach's alpha coefficients ranged from 0.833 for influencer to 0.960 for product involvement. Composite reliability values extended from 0.900 to 0.969, surpassing the conventional minimum of 0.70 across the model.

Table 8. Reflective Measurement Model

Construct	Indicator	Outer Loading	AVE	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability
Influencer	IF1	0.868	0.749	0.833	0.900
	IF2	0.845			
	IF3	0.883			
Online Customer Review	OCR1	0.798	0.739	0.941	0.952
	OCR2	0.879			
	OCR3	0.866			
	OCR4	0.892			
	OCR5	0.886			
	OCR6	0.850			
	OCR7	0.842			
Customer Trust	CT1	0.875	0.826	0.895	0.934
	CT2	0.911			
	CT3	0.940			
Product Involvement	PI1	0.888	0.863	0.960	0.969
	PI2	0.927			
	PI3	0.974			
	PI4	0.912			
	PI5	0.942			
Repurchase Intention	RI1	0.897	0.823	0.928	0.949
	RI2	0.902			
	RI3	0.896			
	RI4	0.934			

Note. AVE = average variance extracted.

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Discriminant validity was assessed through the Fornell–Larcker criterion. The diagonal coefficients represent the square roots of the AVE values. Influencer and online customer reviews retained diagonal values above their correlations with the other constructs. A more complex pattern appears between product involvement and repurchase intention. Their correlation reached 0.931, slightly exceeding the square root of AVE for product involvement at 0.929 and exceeding the corresponding value for repurchase intention at 0.907. Customer trust and repurchase intention were also strongly correlated at 0.896, although this coefficient remained below their respective diagonal values. The results support convergent validity and internal consistency, while the empirical distinction between product involvement and repurchase intention requires careful interpretation.

Table 9. Fornell–Larcker Criterion

Construct	CT	IF	OCR	PI	Republic of Indonesia
Customer Trust (CT)	0.909				
Influencer (IF)	0.786	0.866			
Online Customer Review (OCR)	0.788	0.808	0.860		
Product Involvement (PI)	0.888	0.776	0.768	0.929	
Repurchase Intention (RI)	0.896	0.778	0.794	0.931	0.907

Note. Bold diagonal entries represent the square roots of AVE.

4.5 Structural Model Assessment

The structural model was evaluated through adjusted, effect size, bootstrapped direct effects, specific indirect effects, and the interaction between influencer and product involvement. The estimates reported below retain the numerical values and hypothesis decisions presented in the thesis. Their interpretation remains limited to the observed cross-sectional sample, particularly because the common assessment method indicated substantial shared variance among the self-reported measures.

4.5.1 Explanatory Power

Adjusted was used to determine the proportion of variance in each endogenous construct explained by its predictors after accounting for model complexity. Customer trust obtained an adjusted of 0.685. Influencer and online customer reviews jointly explained 68.5% of the observed variation in customer trust, while 31.5% was associated with factors outside the specified model.

Repurchase intention generated a substantially higher adjusted of 0.896. Influencer, online customer review, customer trust, product involvement, and the interaction between influencer and product involvement collectively accounted for 89.6% of its variation. The remaining 10.4% was related to unobserved determinants not incorporated into the structural specification.

Table 10. Adjusted Values

Endogenous Construct	Adjusted
Customer Trust	0.685
Repurchase Intention	0.896

Source: Research data processed by the author, 2026.

The explanatory power for customer trust was moderate to high, whereas the estimate for repurchase intention was numerically very high. The latter value should not be interpreted as independent evidence of strong out-of-sample predictive accuracy. The earlier common method assessment found that the first unrotated factor captured 63.231% of total indicator variance. Shared respondents, an identical response scale, and simultaneous measurements may have contributed to the covariance underlying the high adjusted .

4.5.2 Effect Size

The statistics examined how much the explanatory power of an endogenous construct changed when an individual predictor was removed from the model. Values near 0.02, 0.15, and 0.35 were interpreted as small, moderate, and large effects, respectively. The analysis distinguished between the main effect of product involvement and the interaction effect used to test moderation.

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Table 11. Effect Size

Predictor	Customer Trust	Influencer	Online Customer Review	Product Involvement	Repurchase Intention
Customer Trust	—	—	—	—	0.115
Influencer	0.203	—	—	—	0.001
Online Customer Review	0.215	—	—	—	0.031
Product Involvement	—	—	—	—	0.662
Repurchase Intention	—	—	—	—	—
Product Involvement × Influencer	—	—	—	—	0.001

Source: Research data processed by the author, 2026.

Influencer produced an of 0.203 for customer trust, while online customer reviews generated a slightly higher value of 0.215. Both predictors therefore made moderate contributions to the variance explained in customer trust. Their similar magnitudes suggest that professionally communicated recommendations and consumer-generated evaluations carry comparable relative importance in shaping confidence toward fast-food MSMEs.

A different pattern emerged for repurchase intention. Customer trust produced an of 0.115, representing a small contribution under the adopted thresholds. Online customer reviews generated 0.031, whereas the direct effect of influencer generated only 0.001. The negligible contribution of influencers was consistent with its nonsignificant direct path to repurchase intention.

Product involvement exhibited the largest main-effect size at 0.662. This coefficient represents its direct contribution to the explained variance of repurchase intention rather than evidence of moderation. The interaction term between product involvement and influencer produced an of only 0.001, indicating that its incremental contribution to the model was practically negligible. The unusually large main effect also requires cautious interpretation because product involvement is strongly correlated with repurchase intention and both were measured through the same survey procedure.

4.5.3 Direct Effects

The hypotheses concerning direct structural relationships were tested through bootstrapping. Statistical support was determined using a two-tailed critical -value of 1.96 and a significance level of 5%. The original sample coefficient indicates the direction and magnitude of each estimated relationship, while the standard deviation represents variability across bootstrap samples.

Table 12. Direct Effects

Hypothesized Relationship	Original Sample	Sample Mean	STDEV	- Statistic	- Value	Decision
Influencer → Customer Trust	0.429	0.428	0.095	4,504	0.000	H1 supported
Online Customer Review → Customer Trust	0.442	0.444	0.096	4,593	0.000	H2 supported
Customer Trust → Repurchase Intention	0.259	0.252	0.085	3,053	0.002	H3 supported
Influencer → Repurchase Intention	0.014	0.020	0.060	0.237	0.813	H4 not supported
Online Customer Review → Repurchase Intention	0.111	0.115	0.057	1,961	0.050	H5 supported

Note. STDEV = standard deviation.

Source: Research data processed by the author, 2026.

Influencers were positively associated with customer trust. The coefficient indicated that more favorable evaluations of influencer trustworthiness, reputation, and credibility corresponded to higher confidence in the competence, benevolence, and integrity of fast-food MSMEs. H1 was therefore supported. Online customer reviews also displayed a positive relationship with customer trust. Its coefficient was marginally larger than the influencer effect, although the numerical difference was limited. Favorable perceptions of review expertise, ratings, argument quality, website reputation, review volume, user engagement, and recency were associated with stronger confidence in the MSME. H2 received empirical support.

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Customer trust was positively related to repurchase intention. Consumers who evaluated an MSME as capable, customer-oriented, honest, and consistent were more inclined to purchase again, maintain product preference, and communicate favorable recommendations. H3 was supported.

The direct relationship between influencer and repurchase intention was positive in sign but statistically negligible. The estimate was close to zero, and its bootstrap variability substantially exceeded the original coefficient. Exposure to or favorable perceptions of influencers did not independently correspond with a meaningful increase in repeat-purchase intention after the remaining constructs were included. H4 was not supported.

Online customer reviews produced a positive direct coefficient for repurchase intention. The result was located precisely at the 5% decision boundary and was classified as significant according to the criterion adopted in the thesis. Its magnitude and effect size remained modest, indicating that online reviews contributed directly to repurchase intention, although the estimated association was considerably weaker than their relationship with customer trust. H5 was supported under the specified threshold.

4.5.4 Indirect Effects

Specific indirect effects were assessed to establish whether customer trust transmitted the influence of the two digital stimuli to repurchase intention. A statistically significant indirect coefficient indicates that the predictor was associated with the behavioral response through changes in customer trust.

Table 13. Specific Indirect Effects

Indirect Relationship	Original Sample	Sample Mean	STDEV	- Statistic	- Value	Decision
Influencer → Customer Trust → Repurchase Intention	0.111	0.106	0.039	2,825	0.005	H6 supported
Online Customer Review → Customer Trust → Repurchase Intention	0.115	0.113	0.048	2,376	0.018	H7 supported

Note. STDEV = standard deviation.

Source: Research data processed by the author, 2026.

The indirect pathway from influencer to repurchase intention through customer trust was positive and statistically significant. Since the corresponding direct relationship between influencer and repurchase intention was nonsignificant, the empirical pattern placed customer trust as the principal transmission mechanism within this pathway. Influencer-related assessments were associated with repeat-purchase intention only after they had been translated into confidence toward the MSME. H6 was supported.

Online customer reviews also exerted a positive indirect association with repurchase intention through customer trust. Both the direct effect and the mediated pathway met the significance criterion applied in the study. Customer reviews remarkably displayed two statistically supported routes: a modest direct relationship with repeat-purchase intention and an additional relationship transmitted through consumer confidence. H7 was supported.

The two indirect coefficients were closely comparable. The pathway originating from online customer reviews reached 0.115, while the influencer-mediated pathway produced 0.111. Their proximity indicates that both forms of digital information were connected with repurchase intention through customer trust at similar magnitudes, even though their direct effects differed substantially.

4.5.5 Moderation Effect

The moderating role of product involvement was tested through the interaction term between product involvement and influencer. A significant interaction would indicate that the strength or direction of the influencer–repurchase intention relationship varied according to the level of consumer involvement with fast-food products.

Table 14. Moderation Effect

Interaction Relationship	Original Sample	Sample Mean	STDEV	- Statistic	- Value	Decision
Product Involvement × Influencer → Repurchase Intention	−0.010	−0.010	0.020	0.496	0.620	H8 not supported

Note. STDEV = standard deviation.

Source: Research data processed by the author, 2026.

The interaction coefficient was negative and statistically nonsignificant. The sign alone cannot be interpreted as evidence that product involvement weakened the influencer effect because the estimate did not differ meaningfully from zero. Customers displaying higher involvement with fast-food products did not exhibit a statistically distinguishable influencer–repurchase relationship from those reporting lower involvement. H8 was not supported.

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The moderation results differ from the large main-effect size recorded for product involvement. Its direct association with repurchase intention contributed substantially to the explained variance, whereas its interaction with influencer added almost no additional explanatory value. Product involvement was therefore empirically relevant as an independent predictor in the estimated model, but it did not operate as a boundary condition for the influence of digital endorsers.

5. Discussion

The findings substantiate the Stimulus–Organism–Response framework by showing that digital marketing cues acquire behavioral relevance through consumers' internal evaluations rather than through exposure alone (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974). Influencer and online customer reviews both strengthened customer trust, while trust subsequently increased repurchase intention. Their direct behavioral effects differed: influencer content did not independently predict repeat-purchase intention, whereas online reviews produced a small effect at the statistical boundary. This configuration indicates that commercially curated recommendations and experience-based evaluations perform different functions in the repurchase process.

Influencers positively affected customer trust (,), indicating that perceived reputation, credibility, experience, and trustworthiness help consumers assess difficult-to-observe product attributes. This mechanism is relevant to fast food because taste, freshness, portion adequacy, and hygiene cannot be fully evaluated before consumption. The high score for influencer reputation suggests that visible social standing operates as an initial credibility cue, although the lower assessment of message honesty reveals caution toward promotional claims. Personal communication and source–audience proximity can facilitate trust formation when the endorser is seen as credible and sincere (Iffah, 2025; Bahari & Widagdo, 2025). Related evidence links trust in influencers to customer responses and the transfer of confidence from endorsers to promoted brands (Nur et al., 2025; Almahdi et al., 2022).

Online customer reviews exerted a stronger effect on customer trust (,). Reviews provide evidence about product quality, service, price, cleanliness, and transaction experience, allowing customers to compare seller claims with other buyers' experiences. Product ratings and review volume were the most prominent descriptive cues, implying that consumers initially rely on aggregated signals before examining individual arguments. Reviewer expertise received the lowest evaluation, suggesting greater confidence in collective patterns than in a single contributor's authority. These results correspond with evidence that online reviews enhance trust and that ratings, visual support, information completeness, and review quantity shape perceptions of product reliability (Fahrozi et al., 2022; Park et al., 2021; Sung et al., 2023).

Customer trust positively influences repurchase intention (,), confirming its role as the organismic state that translates external information into a behavioral relationship. Trust reduces uncertainty regarding whether an MSME can reproduce acceptable taste, hygiene, service, price fairness, and product consistency in future transactions. Benevolence was especially salient, as respondents rated concern for customer satisfaction more highly than technical competence. Repeat purchasing depends not only on production capability but also on the expectation that the seller will respond responsibly when problems arise. Previous studies identified trust as a determinant of repurchase intention and a foundation for sustained customer–brand relationships (Yuliani et al., 2025; Aryanzah et al., 2026; Junianingrum et al., 2023; Abul et al., 2023).

Influencers did not directly affect repurchase intention (,). The negligible coefficient separates influencer content's role in stimulating awareness or trial from the mechanisms governing repeated consumption. Once customers have experienced the product, sensory and operational evidence becomes more proximal than external promotion. Taste, portion size, hygiene, packaging, price, delivery speed, and service consistency can validate or disconfirm expectations created by an influencer. The results align with the SOR proposition that a stimulus needs not generate an immediate response when internal evaluation and consumption experience intervene (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974). It also accords with evidence that repurchase decisions may depend more heavily on mediating mechanisms, satisfaction, price, promotion, and accumulated experience than on marketing communication alone (Ariandi, 2025; Trenggana et al., 2022).

Online customer reviews displayed a positive direct relationship with repurchase intention (,), although its magnitude was limited and its significance was marginal. Unlike influencer recommendations, reviews originate from consumers who have directly interacted with the offering. This experiential proximity enables customers to validate whether their perceptions are idiosyncratic or shared by others. Consistent comments regarding taste, quality, price, cleanliness, and service can reinforce the suitability of a subsequent purchase, while conflicting evaluations may weaken confidence. Comparable findings show that credible, relevant, and high-quality reviews support rational product assessment and repeated purchasing (Rivas et al., 2021; Fauzi & Rini, 2022; Miao et al., 2021; Sukoco et al., 2025).

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The mediation results clarify why the two stimuli produced different direct effects. Customer trust fully mediated the influencer–repurchase intention relationship (,), because the indirect path was significant while the direct path was not. Influencer reputation and credibility generated behavioral relevance only after consumers translated the recommendation into confidence in the MSME's competence, integrity, benevolence, and consistency. This indirect-only pattern supports research positioning trust as the psychological bridge between influencer credibility and repeated purchases (Miao et al., 2021; Ariandi, 2025). For fast-food MSMEs, promotional visibility may create initial access, yet repurchase emerges when actual consumption confirms the claims embedded in the content.

Customer trust partially and complementarily mediated the relationship between online customer reviews and repurchase intention (,). Reviews influence repeated purchases as usable information and a basis for evaluating seller reliability. Ratings, review volume, recency, platform reputation, and argument quality can directly guide choice; the same cues can reduce uncertainty and strengthen confidence before behavioral intention develops. This dual pathway is consistent with findings that informative reviews increase trust, which then sustains repurchase intention (Anggraeni, 2024; Rahanatha, 2025; Ayuwandani et al., 2024).

Product involvement did not moderate the influencer–repurchase intention relationship (,), and the interaction effect was negligible (). The negative sign lacks substantive meaning because the interaction was nonsignificant. Fast food is affordable, frequently purchased, easily substituted, and associated with limited financial risk, reducing the likelihood that varying involvement levels will materially alter responses to influencer communication. Respondents paid attention to influencer recommendations, yet product importance was comparatively weaker, indicating active information search without strong attachment to one offering. Prior evidence also shows that product involvement does not consistently function as a moderator when habitual choice, heuristic cues, and product characteristics dominate decision processes (Ali, 2023; Fernandez et al., 2022).

Conclusion

This study examined the relationships among influencer credibility, online customer reviews, customer trust, repurchase intention, and product involvement among 210 customers of fast-food F&B MSMEs in Malang City. The empirical conclusions are confined to the sampled respondents, the measurement instruments employed, the geographical setting, and the specific characteristics of frequently purchased fast-food products. They should not be generalized directly to all F&B businesses, consumer groups, or product categories.

Influencer credibility and online customer reviews function as meaningful digital stimuli in the formation of customer trust. Influencers have a positive and statistically significant relationship with customer trust, indicating that trustworthiness, reputation, and credibility contributed to customers' confidence in the promoted MSMEs. Reputation received the strongest descriptive assessment, whereas honesty in promotional communication was evaluated more cautiously. This pattern suggests that public recognition can facilitate initial acceptance of a recommendation, although consumers continue to scrutinize the authenticity and reliability of the information conveyed.

Online customer reviews also exerted a positive and significant influence on customer trust. Star ratings, review volume, recency, user engagement, and the clarity of review arguments provided customers with practical evidence for assessing product quality and business reliability. Aggregate signals, particularly high ratings and numerous reviews, appear more influential than the perceptions of individual reviewer expertise. Customer-generated information reduces uncertainty by enabling consumers to compare promotional claims with experiences reported by other buyers.

Customer trust positively influences repurchase intention. Confidence in an MSME's competence, benevolence, integrity, honesty, and consistency increases customers' willingness to purchase again, recommend the product, and maintain a continued consumption relationship. Benevolence occupies a particularly important position, as concern for customer satisfaction received the highest descriptive evaluation within the trust construct. Repeat purchasing was significantly associated not only with the technical ability to provide acceptable products but also with the expectation that the business would act responsibly, communicate honestly, and respond appropriately to customer needs.

Influencers did not produce a statistically significant direct effect on repurchase intention. Digital endorsements may attract attention, introduce products, and strengthen perceptions of credibility, yet they do not independently ensure subsequent purchases once consumers have acquired direct consumption experience. Repeat-purchase decisions appear to depend more strongly on whether the influencer's claims are translated into trust and confirmed through taste, portion size, cleanliness, price fairness, packaging, service speed, and product consistency.

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Online customer reviews retained a positive direct relationship with repurchase intention, although the effect was modest and located at the statistical threshold adopted in the study. Reviews can support repeated purchases because they provide experiential information that consumers may use to validate their own evaluations. Their influence also operated indirectly through customer trust, revealing that online reviews serve both an informational function and a confidence-building role.

Customer trust significantly mediated the influence of both digital stimuli on repurchase intention. The influencer pathway represented indirect-only mediation because the direct association was nonsignificant, whereas the online review pathway displayed complementary mediation because both its direct and indirect effects moved in a positive direction. Trust accordingly acts as the principal psychological mechanism through which influencer communication acquired behavioral relevance and as an additional mechanism reinforcing the informational value of customer reviews.

Product involvement did not moderate the relationship between influencer and repurchase intention. Differences in customers' perceived importance, interest, attention, relevance, and personal value attached to fast-food products did not materially alter the effectiveness of influencer communication. Consumers may actively observe digital recommendations without developing a strong attachment to one product, particularly in a market characterized by routine purchases, low financial risk, and numerous substitutes.

The adjusted values of 0.685 for customer trust and 0.896 for repurchase intention indicate substantial in-sample explanatory power. These values require careful interpretation because Harman's single-factor test showed that the first factor explained 63.231% of the indicator variance. The potential presence of common method bias means that part of the covariance may stem from the single-source, self-report, and cross-sectional measurement procedure. Path coefficients, effect sizes, and explained variance should be treated as empirical associations within the sample rather than definitive causal estimates free from methodological influence.

Practical Suggestions

Fast-food F&B MSMEs in Malang City should position influencer collaboration as a trust-building instrument rather than relying on it solely for promotional reach. Influencer selection needs to consider reputation, perceived honesty, relevance to the customer segment, actual familiarity with the product, and the capacity to communicate consumption experiences authentically. Local food vloggers and micro-influencers may be particularly useful when their content presents realistic information concerning taste, portion size, price, hygiene, packaging, and service speed. Campaign performance should be assessed through changes in customer confidence, store visits, first-time transactions, and repeat purchases rather than being restricted to impressions, follower counts, or engagement rates.

The management of online customer reviews should prioritize authenticity, accessibility, and professional responsiveness. Businesses may provide links or QR codes that simplify post-purchase feedback while avoiding practices that pressure customers to submit artificially positive evaluations. Review quantity and star ratings require attention because both dimensions received the strongest descriptive responses, yet concrete narratives remain valuable for explaining product quality, cleanliness, portion adequacy, pricing, and consistency. Negative reviews should be addressed respectfully and used as diagnostic information for operational improvement rather than dismissed or ignored without evaluation.

Customer trust needs to occupy the center of retention strategy. MSMEs should establish and maintain standards for taste, ingredient quality, hygiene, portion size, price transparency, order accuracy, preparation time, packaging, and complaint handling. Marketing promises must correspond with actual consumption experiences. Honest communication, prompt correction of service failures, and visible concern for customer welfare can reduce perceived risk and strengthen the probability of repeated transactions.

The nonsignificant moderation effect implies that influencer strategies need not be segmented exclusively according to high or low product involvement. A more relevant approach is to integrate promotional content with product attributes that customers can verify directly. Clear pricing, realistic product images, simple ordering procedures, stable quality, and responsive service are likely to be more consequential for routine fast-food purchases than attempts to intensify psychological involvement with a single offering.

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