

Examining digital influencers' impact on customer's hedonic motivation, utilitarian motivation and purchase intention

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ABSTRACT

Keywords:

hedonic
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digital influencer
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The purpose of this study is to investigate how external factors influence people's intentions to buy food online. A survey was conducted using an online form that was widely distributed to people who follow digital influencers on social media, have made online food purchases, and live in Jabodetabek (Jakarta, Bogor, Depok, Tangerang, and Bekasi). The study was conducted to gather a more comprehensive view of consumer shopping behavior in Indonesia by combining trends, visual appeals, sales promotion, and information availability from digital influences in social media that impact customer motivation (hedonic and utilitarian) and customer purchase intention for food products online. The research results demonstrate a genuine relationship between digital influences and their impact on social networks as a new trend of the digital era. The study also proves that there is a positive relationship between the hedonistic motivation and the Utilitarian motivation on purchase intention. Moreover, the research shows that promotions carried out on different platforms from the sales platform can also have a significant impact on consumer motivation and purchasing intentions. Based on the research results, we recommend that food product sellers should consider using digital influences as promotional tools on social platforms. We recommend that future researchers investigate differences in shopping motivation based on different products or consumer market segments, especially in terms of external factors that trigger motivation to shop for food through digital activities.

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INTRODUCTION

Indonesia's economy heavily relies on domestic consumption, specifically in the food and beverage industry. This sector plays a significant role in the country's economy, as it contributed 33% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in the processing industry sector during the second quarter of 2023 (Pratiwi & Bayu, 2023). According to data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS), the gross domestic product (GDP) at constant prices (ADHK) from the food and beverage industry was valued at IDR 209.51 trillion in the second quarter of 2023. This figure represents a 4.62% increase compared to the same period in the previous year (year on year/yoy), which amounted to IDR 200.30 trillion (Mustajab & Bayu, 2023). This growth is mainly attributed to the rising consumer spending decisions and increased consumption in food shopping.

Traditionally, consumers have been driven to purchase food based on personal interests such as price, quality, convenience, and familiar brands (Nurse Rainbolt, et al., 2012). However, further research suggests that other factors influence consumers' purchasing decisions, such as whether the product is imported or domestic (Nurse Rainbolt, et al., 2012), or whether it is organic or non-organic (Wunderlich et al., 2017). Additionally, consumers with different beliefs have different attitudes and motivations (Bukhari et al., 2020). Despite these differences, there are fundamental similarities in food purchasing decision patterns, as they require sensory involvement in feeling, hearing, smelling, and touching (Silaban et al., 2023; Bizel & Ortega, 2021; Ifeanyichukwu & Peter, 2018). The existence of sensory elements that form the basis of consumers' cognitive and emotional perceptions is crucial in understanding consumer purchasing decisions, especially in the food industry (Silaban et al., 2023). However, with the emergence of online shopping, food purchasing

patterns have changed significantly over time (Pramezwar, et al., 2023). Nowadays, consumers seem to pay less attention to direct assessments of food and instead consider visual communication, reviews, trends, and information that are easily obtained through digital platforms, including the role of digital influencers (BBC, 2016; Lee, et al., 2021; Zhou, et al., 2021).

Social media influencers play a crucial role in shaping consumer opinions and purchasing decisions. Through their opinions, comments, and recommendations, they can promote and popularize brands and products (Sánchez-Fernández & Jiménez-Castillo, 2020; Helversen et al., 2018; Lee, et al., 2021; Zhou, et al., 2021). Their use of images and videos can also make content more visually appealing and engaging for followers (Ki & Kim, 2019). Digital influencers have the power to create and spread new food trends, as well as to promote food through various promotional programs, making them a reliable source of information for consumers (Lin et al., 2018; Doorn & Hoekstra, 2013). This ability to provide persuasive content that appeals to both utilitarian and hedonic motivations has a strong influence on consumers, even in low-involvement scenarios (Voss et al., 2003).

The impact of hedonic and utilitarian factors in online marketing engagement is reflected in several areas, including aesthetic appeal, novelty, challenge, and feedback (O'Brien, 2010). When carried out correctly and tailored to meet consumer interests and needs, targeted and personalized marketing can contribute to positive feelings (Schumann et al., 2014). Research by Guido et al. (2007) explains that two motivational states drive shopping behavior: the telic state, which refers to goal-oriented actions (utilitarian), and the paratelic state, which refers to the desire for pleasure from one's behavior (hedonic). This research supports Singh (2014) findings that motivation based on hedonic and utilitarian values is an important factor that can influence online information searches and affect consumers' purchasing intentions.

The ever-growing impact of online product reviews has led to changes in consumer behavior in the food industry, which is typically considered a high-involvement product but has become more low-involvement due to advancements in digital technology. Despite this influence, there is limited research on the factors that influence consumer motivation to make purchases through digital influencers. However, recent studies suggest that digital influencers can be more effective in evaluating products online than direct brand evaluations (Hermenda et al., 2019; Castillo & Fernández, 2019; Widyanto & Agusti, 2020). This highlights the importance of this research, especially considering the significant behavioral changes that have occurred, as purchasing food has always been an experience that involves feeling, hearing, smelling, and touching (Silaban et al., 2023; Bizel & Ortega, 2021; Ifeanyichukwu & Peter, 2018). Nevertheless, consumers now have different tendencies due to the influence of digital influencers, who provide motivation based on trends, visuals, promotions, and the availability of information. Previous research has already discussed the impact of digital influencers on consumer behavior. Prior studies have explored the impact of digital influencers across diverse sectors, such as the fashion industry (Gomes et al., 2022), the technology industry (Veluchamy et al., 2021), tourism (Stylos et al., 2021) including the food industry (Abell & Biswas, 2022). However, limited research has been conducted on the food industry. Nevertheless, current phenomena indicate that digital influencers wield significant influence over consumers' product conversion process, especially in explaining the influence of consumer motivation which leads to decision-making and intentions in purchasing online food products.

The purpose of this research is to investigate how external factors influence people's intentions to buy food online. Moreover, the study was conducted to gather a more comprehensive view of consumer shopping behavior in Indonesia by combining trends, visual appeals, sales promotion, and information availability from digital influencers in social media that impact customer motivation (hedonic and utilitarian) and customer purchase intention for food products online.

The hypotheses used were:

- 1) H1: Trends will positively affect customer hedonic motivations
- 2) H2: Visual Appeals will positively affect the customer's hedonic motivations
- 3) H3: Sales promotion will positively affect the customer's utilitarian motivations
- 4) H4: Information Availability will positively affect the customer's utilitarian motivations
- 5) H5: Hedonic motivation will positively affect the purchase intention
- 6) H6: Utilitarian motivation will positively affect the purchase intention

METHOD

A survey was conducted using an online form that was widely distributed to people who follow digital influencers on social media, have made online food purchases, and live in Jabodetabek (Jakarta, Bogor, Depok, Tangerang, and Bekasi). A total of 504 respondents participated in the survey with 53.4% female and 46.6% male respondents. The age range of the respondents was 15-17 years old (14.7%), 18-25 years old (54%), 26-40 years old (28.2%), and above 40 years old (3.1%). The survey used a non-probability-purposive sampling technique with specific criteria and variables. Seven variables were used in the questionnaire, namely Trends (TR), Visual Appeals (VA), Sales Promotion (SP), Information Availability (IA), Hedonic Motivation (HM),

Utilitarian Motivation (UM), and Purchase Intention (PI). The survey used a Likert-type scale consisting of 5-7 points, with 1= Strongly Disagree, 2= Disagree, 3= Neutral, 4= Agree, and 5= Strongly Agree. Structural equation modeling (SEM) techniques were used to process the research data through SmartPLS Software 4.

This measurement or test is performed to analyze the suitability of indicators and variables in their relationship. Convergent validity was analyzed by looking at the results of external loadings and Average Variance Extracted (AVE). It has been observed that four indicators have values below the minimum limit of 0.70, as determined by Hair et al. (2014). These indicators are IA1 (indicator 1 of the Information Availability variable) with a score of 0.695, IA4 (indicator 4 of the Information Availability variable) with a score of 0.694, TR4 (indicator 4 of the Trend variable) with a score of 0.626, and VA1 (indicator 1 of the Visual Appeals variable) with a score of 0.582. Thus, it is recommended to remove these four indicators, resulting in 23 indicators measuring 7 variables. The results presented in Table 1 demonstrate the convergent validity, which was obtained after re-calculating the values by removing the four previous indicators. The outcomes indicate that each variable has a good AVE value, with a score higher than 0.50, which is the minimum threshold for AVE assessment (Hair et al., 2006). Additionally, Cronbach's Alpha assessment shows that each variable has a good value, with a score greater than 0.70, which is in line with the proposed limits (Fornell & Larcker, 1981).

Table 1. Variable Measurement

Variables	Items	Outer loading	Cronbach Alpha	Construct Reliability	AVE
TR	I know the latest food trends by following recommendations from influencers on social media.	0.893	0.895	0.935	0.827
	I keep up with the latest food trends by following recommendations from influencers on social media.	0.904			
	I had a new experience by following recommendations from influencers on social media.	0.886			
VA	I like the visual design of the content about food that influencers promoted on social media.	0.829	0.775	0.870	0.692
	I am interested in the design aspects, such as color, photo/video background, and music, of the content about food that promoted by influencers on social media.	0.859			
	I'm fascinated by the way influencers promote their content about food on social media.	0.737			
SP	I prefer purchasing food online as I find influencers offer discounts on social media.	0.738	0.776	0.857	0.600
	I tend to buy more food online after learning about the various promotions offered by influencers on social media.	0.810			
	I enjoy finding cheap food deals through promotional content shared by influencers on social media.	0.841			
	I can find better food deals for my money through influencer promotions on social media.	0.703			
IA	I find the food product information provided by influencers on social media to be very useful.	0.825	0.740	0.885	0.794
	I feel helped to make better purchasing transactions because of the information on food products promoted by influencers on social media.	0.808			
HM	I feel happy when I shop for food online.	0.751	0.782	0.860	0.606

	I feel more comfortable when I shop for food online.	0.791			
	I enjoy shopping when I shop for food online.	0.841			
	I feel excited when I shop for food online.	0.726			
UM	I feel more efficient when I shop for food online.	0.760			
	I find it helpful when I shop for food online.	0.861	0.799	0.870	0.626
	I have a desire to shop for food through online.	0.795			
	I find it practical when I shop for food online.	0.743			
PI	I will buy food online based on suggestions given by influencers on social media.	0.823			
	I will buy food online after following recommendations by influencers on social media.	0.909	0.817	0.892	0.733
	In the future, I will return to buying food online because of recommendations by influencers on social media	0.834			

The data analysis involved the use of the Fornell Larcker Criterion. This criterion compares the square root of each Average Variance Extracted (AVE) to the correlation coefficient for each construct in the relevant row and column (Fornell & Larcker, 1971). The assessment used in the Fornell Larcker Criterion is that the comparison value of similar variables must be greater than the comparison with dissimilar variables so that the analysis results show good results because similar variables have larger numbers than dissimilar variables. Furthermore, in testing reliability, researchers can use an assessment analysis on Composite Reliability and Cronbach's Alpha. The Composite Reliability and Cronbach's Alpha values must be more than 0.70 for good reliability analysis results. The data shows that there is consistency in the model series measurement.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 2. Discriminant Validity (Fornell Larcker Criterion)

	HM	IA	PI	SP	TR	UM	VA
HM	0.779						
IA	0.534	0.891					
PI	0.703	0.509	0.856				
SP	0.661	0.497	0.679	0.775			
TR	0.734	0.626	0.701	0.713	0.909		
UM	0.696	0.664	0.620	0.652	0.761	0.791	
VA	0.648	0.592	0.553	0.554	0.706	0.703	0.832

To strengthen the research, a structural model analysis was carried out by assessing the R^2 values, Path Coefficients, and t-values using 5,000 resamples through bootstrapping techniques. This was done in accordance with the recommendations given by Hair et al. (2017). The R^2 values obtained were as follows: HM = 0.572; UM = 0.527; and PI = 0.579. This means that the exogenous variables in each of these variables can explain 57% of the variance in Hedonic Motivation, 52% of the variance in Utilitarian Motivation, and 57% of the variance in Purchase Intention.

The research hypothesis has been tested based on the results of Path Coefficients and t-values as identified in Table 3. These results show that the trend has a positive ($\beta = 0.550$) and significant ($t = 12.915$) relationship with hedonic motivation, so hypothesis 1 can be supported. Furthermore, the relationship between visual appeals and hedonic motivation has a positive impact ($\beta = 0.260$) and is significant ($t = 5.660$), supporting hypothesis 2. In addition, the relationship between sales promotion and utilitarian motivation is also positive ($\beta = 0.428$) and significant ($t = 10.834$) thus supporting hypothesis 3. Another relationship, namely information availability, has a positive ($\beta = 0.451$) and significant ($t = 12.226$) effect on utilitarian motivation, and directly supports hypothesis 4. Then, the respective relationship between hedonic motivation and utilitarian motivation on purchase intention has a positive effect with $\beta = 0.526$ (HM) and $\beta = 0.254$ (UM) and a significant level of $t = 11.858$ (HM) and $t = 5.624$ (UM), so it directly supports hypotheses 5 and 6.

Table 3. Hypothesis Testing

Path	Original Sample (O)	t-statistics
Trend -> Hedonic Motivation	0.550	12,915
Visual Appeals -> Hedonic Motivation	0.260	5,660
Sales Promotion -> Utilitarian Motivation	0.428	10,834
Information Availability -> Utilitarian Motivation	0.451	12,226
Hedonic Motivation -> Purchase Intention	0.526	11,858
Utilitarian Motivation -> Purchase Intention	0.254	5,624

In previous research To et al. (2007) found a relationship between sales promotion and information availability and utilitarian motivation, but also found that there was no trend relationship with hedonic motivation. However, our study found that digital influencers on social media have a positive and significant impact on relation between trends and hedonic motivation ($\beta = 0.550$; $t = 12.915$), as well as visual appeals which has previously been proven in research by Martínez-López et al (2016) which is related to hedonic motivation ($\beta = 0.260$; $t = 5.660$). In the other hand, we found that trends and visual appeal (i.e. the way food is presented) have a particularly strong impact on people's hedonic motivation. This means that when digital influencers promote food in a trendy and visually appealing way on social media, people are more likely to want to buy it for pleasure. The researchers also found that trends have a stronger impact than visual appeal on people's motivation to buy food online. Therefore, we conclude that our hypotheses (H1 and H2) are supported and that the trends variable (H1) have the greatest influence on hedonic motivation.

According to a study by To et al. (2007), sales promotion factors and information availability have a positive relationship with utilitarian motivation. In this particular study, the relationship between these factors and utilitarian motivation was analyzed through the role of digital influencers on social media. The results revealed that sales promotion ($\beta = 0.428$; $t = 10.834$) and information availability ($\beta = 0.451$; $t = 12.226$) have a significant and positive impact on consumer utilitarian motivation. This means that offering more promotions in the form of price discounts and providing more information through digital influencers on social media can increase consumer utilitarian motivation. Furthermore, information availability has a greater influence on consumer motivation compared to sales promotion. This means that consumers consider the information provided by digital influencers on social media as more important when making their purchasing decisions. Based on these findings, it can be concluded that H3 and H4 are supported, with the greatest impact being on the relationship between H4.

This research also proves that there is a positive relationship between hedonic motivation and utilitarian motivation on purchase intention. The result determines the relationship between consumer motivation in purchasing food online. The relationship between hedonic motivation and purchase intention suggests that high hedonic motivation drives food purchases, as indicated by significant results ($\beta = 0.526$; $t = 11.858$). These results are classified as high when compared with utilitarian motivation which has a significantly lower level ($\beta = 0.254$; $t = 5.624$) than hedonic motivation. According to research results the primary reason why consumers buy food online is due to hedonic motivation, which is significantly influenced by digital influencers on social media. As a result, it can be concluded that hypotheses H5 and H6 are supported by the findings.

The research results demonstrate a genuine relationship between digital influencers and their impact on social media as a new trend of the digital era, which supports people's consumption patterns. The study finds that external factors can be directly triggered by the activities of digital influencers on social media, particularly in the context of this research, which is related to the development of food trends, the visual appearance of food in content, promotion/marketing of food on social media, and the availability of food information. These factors have a significant influence on consumers by providing a pleasant and useful experience, which concludes through the positive influence seen in each variable. The study also finds that both hedonic motivation and utilitarian motivation have a substantial impact, as seen through the positive influence they have on consumers' online purchase intentions for food.

In terms of consumer experience, hedonic motivation plays the most important role as it provides feelings of joy and fun. The biggest external factor that influences this motivation is the development of trends. This attitude is often linked to the FOMO (Fear of Missing Out) phenomenon which pushes consumers to always follow the latest trends and feel the need to purchase products or items related to it. On the other hand, the utilitarian side also influences consumer motivation, especially in terms of the availability of complete and easily accessible information. This is due to the presence of digital influencers on social media who provide information that helps consumers make informed decisions. According to the result, the process of selling food cannot be limited to using promotions on a single platform. The research shows that promotions carried out on different platforms from the sales platform can also have a significant impact on consumer motivation and purchasing intentions. Therefore, it is important to consider using multiple platforms for promotions in order to increase sales.

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CONCLUSION

The study highlights the significant impact of digital influencers on social media, particularly in the context of food trends, visual appearance, promotion, and food information availability. These factors have a positive influence on consumers' online purchase intentions for food. Hedonic motivation, which provides joy and fun, is the most important external factor, often linked to FOMO (fear of missing out). On the other hand, utilitarian motivation, which provides complete and easily accessible information, is also influenced by digital influencers. The research suggests that food product sellers should consider using digital influencers as a promotional tool on social media to increase consumer interest in online food products. However, the study's general overview and limited focus on specific social media platforms may not be representative of Indonesia as a whole. Future research should explore the differences in influence of digital influencers on specific platforms and investigate shopping motivation based on different products or consumer market segments.

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