

The Influence of Influencer Marketing and Viral Marketing on Glad2glow Product Purchase Decisions with Trust as a Mediating Variable

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the influence of influencer marketing and viral marketing on purchasing decisions for Glad2Glow products, with trust as a mediating variable among Generation Z in Surakarta. The study used a descriptive quantitative approach with a purposive sampling technique on 80 Generation Z respondents who were familiar with Glad2Glow products. Data were collected through a questionnaire using a Likert scale and analyzed using the Partial Least Square (PLS) method using SmartPLS. The results showed that influencer marketing had a positive and significant effect on trust, and viral marketing also had a positive and significant effect on trust. Viral marketing was proven to have a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions, while influencer marketing did not have a significant effect on purchasing decisions. In addition, trust did not have a significant effect on purchasing decisions. The results of the mediation test also showed that trust was unable to mediate the influence of influencer marketing or viral marketing on purchasing decisions. These findings indicate that for Glad2Glow skincare products, viral marketing strategies are more effective in driving purchasing decisions than influencer marketing, while consumer trust has not been a factor that directly determines purchasing decisions. This study provides implications for companies to optimize digital marketing strategies, especially through strengthening viral content that can increase consumer appeal and engagement.

Keywords : *influencer marketing, viral marketing, trust, purchasing decisions, Generation Z, Glad2Glow.*

INTRODUCTION

Current economic and technological advancements are driving many Indonesian companies to optimize their marketing functions and roles, particularly in the era of globalization, including in the beauty industry. Every company is required to meet consumer needs while simultaneously innovating to create superior products that differentiate themselves from their competitors. (Arianty & Andira, 2021)

Consumers' ease of access to product information can influence purchasing decisions. Furthermore, intense competition in the cosmetics market also influences consumer purchasing decisions. The purchasing decision is one stage in the decision-making process, where consumers ultimately decide to make a purchase. Consumers will go through several stages in this process before actually making a purchase.

Trust is a form of confidence in another party that arises because of the assumption that the party can be relied on and trusted. (Kusumawati & Saifudin, 2020) suggests that trust plays a role in influencing consumer purchasing decisions. Trust is also a crucial factor driving purchasing decisions. This trust is reflected in consumers' perceptions of a brand as a trustworthy and reliable entity. Trust can also be driven by other factors such as influencer marketing and viral marketing. Research from (Welsa et al., 2024) stated that trust is able to mediate the influence of service quality on Go-Food purchasing decisions, and trust is also able to mediate the influence of ease of use on consumer purchasing decisions.

Influencer marketing is a marketing strategy that utilizes public figures or reference groups on social media to influence consumer attitudes, behavior, and purchasing decisions. Research from (Fathurrahman et al., 2021). revealed that the influencer marketing variable has a positive influence on purchasing decisions.

Viral marketing It is also considered quite effective and efficient because the more viral a product becomes, the wider the engagement will be, making it easier for people to access and seek information about the product they are considering. Research from (Fathurrahman et al., 2021) suggests that the viral marketing variable has a positive influence on purchasing decisions. In addition, research from (Martias, 2023) stated that viral marketing has a significant influence on purchasing decisions.

The rapid development of technology has made it easier for people to meet their needs. It's no longer difficult for various groups to access social media and find information about desired products, from baby boomers, through Generation X, Generation Y, Generation Z, and even Generation Alpha. Businesses often exploit this situation to promote their products. The skincare industry in Indonesia has shown significant growth as public awareness of the importance of skincare increases.

Glad2Glow is a local brand that is showing significant growth through the use of influencer marketing and viral marketing, but the effectiveness of these two strategies has not been empirically proven. This product is also in the skincare category that highly demands consumer trust, so it is important to examine whether the use of influencers and the distribution of viral content can truly build trust and influence purchasing decisions, especially among Generation Z. Furthermore, the limitations of previous research on Glad2Glow create a clear research gap, making this brand a relevant research object and worthy of further study.

Based on several differences in research regarding the influence of influencer marketing and viral marketing on purchasing decisions, this study is interesting. Coupled with several innovations from the Glad2Glow brand, its stability in achieving top-selling products on several e-commerce platforms in recent months, and the lack of previous research on Glad2Glow products, this prompted the author to conduct this research.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employed a descriptive quantitative research method, through hypothesis testing, which was used to analyze and explain the relationships between the variables studied, as well as to identify possible differences between two or more independent variables under certain conditions. The time required for this research process was 2 months (December-January) because data collection used a closed questionnaire, making it faster.

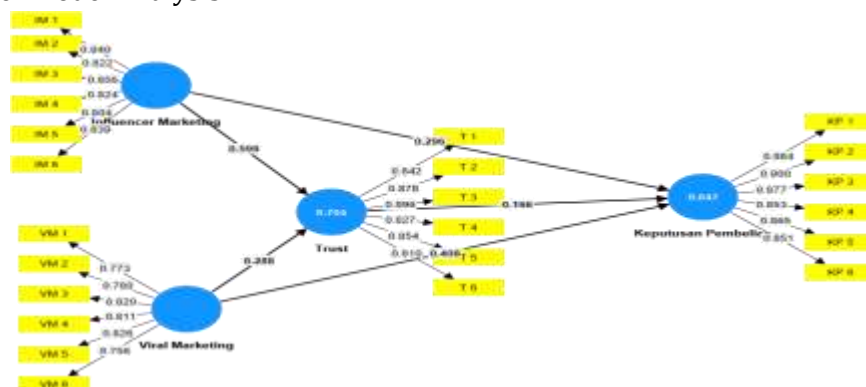
The population in this study was Generation Z residents of Surakarta who were familiar with Glad2Glow products. The sample size was 80 individuals. The sampling technique used in this study was non-probability sampling using purposive sampling, as certain criteria were used.

This study uses the independent variables: influencer marketing and viral marketing. The dependent variable is purchasing decisions and the mediating variable is trust.

The data collection technique in this research method is by using a questionnaire, namely a data collection technique by providing a list of written questions to respondents to be answered independently. This research uses a Linkert Scale with answer choices: (1) Strongly Disagree (STS) (2) Disagree (TS), (3) Neutral (N), (4) Agree (S), (5) Strongly Agree (SS). Data analysis in this research is a quantitative analysis using Partial Least Square or PLS analysis. Imam, 2006 in(Linda & Japriksa., 2014)stated that SmartPLS is a powerful software because it can handle small amounts of data. The software used in this study was SmartPLS.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Outer Model Analysis



Picture1. Outer Model

The validity test will be carried out twice, namely the convergent validity test and the discriminant validity test. Meanwhile, the reliability test is a test using Cronbach's Alpha and composite reliability.

a. Convergent Validity Test (Convergent Validity)

Table 1. Outer loading value of all variables

Variables	Indicator	<i>Outer loading</i>	Information
<i>Influencer Marketing (X1)</i>	IM 1	0.840	<i>Valid</i>
	IM 2	0.822	<i>Valid</i>
	IM 3	0.856	<i>Valid</i>
	IM 4	0.824	<i>Valid</i>
	IM 5	0.804	<i>Valid</i>
	IM 6	0.839	<i>Valid</i>
<i>Viral marketing (X2)</i>	VM 1	0.773	<i>Valid</i>
	VM 2	0.780	<i>Valid</i>
	VM 3	0.820	<i>Valid</i>
	VM 4	0.811	<i>Valid</i>
	VM 5	0.826	<i>Valid</i>
	VM 6	0.756	<i>Valid</i>
<i>Trust</i>	T 1	0.842	<i>Valid</i>
	T 2	0.878	<i>Valid</i>
	T 3	0.896	<i>Valid</i>
	T 4	0.827	<i>Valid</i>
	T 5	0.854	<i>Valid</i>
	T 6	0.810	<i>Valid</i>
Purchase Decision (Y)	KP 1	0.884	<i>Valid</i>
	KP 2	0.900	<i>Valid</i>
	KP 3	0.877	<i>Valid</i>
	KP 4	0.853	<i>Valid</i>
	KP 5	0.865	<i>Valid</i>
	KP 6	0.851	<i>Valid</i>

Source: Processed Primary Data, 2026

b. Discriminant Validity Test

Table 2. Fornier Lacker Value in Discriminant Validity Test

Variables	<i>Influencer Marketing</i>	<i>Viral marketing</i>	<i>Trust</i>	<i>Buying decision</i>	Information
<i>Influencer Marketing</i>	0.831				Valid
Buying decision	0.743			0.872	Valid
<i>Trust</i>	0.818		0.852	0.712	Valid
<i>Viral Marketing</i>	0.760	0.795	0.744	0.757	Valid

Source: Processed Primary Data, 2026

Based on table 2 which shows the results of primary data testing to test discriminant validity, it shows that the AVE root value for each variable > correlation between the construct and other constructs, so it can be concluded that all variables are declared valid in discriminant terms.

c. Reliability Test

Table 3. Cronbach's alpha & composite reliability values

Variables	Cronbach's alpha value	Composite reliability value	Information
<i>Influencer Marketing</i>	0.910	0.911	Reliable
<i>Viral marketing</i>	0.883	0.833	Reliable
<i>Trust</i>	0.924	0.925	Reliable
Buying decision	0.937	0.939	Reliable

Source: Processed Primary Data, 2026

Based on the results of the reliability test in the Reliability Test Value Table, it is known that all variables in this study have Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability values that are above the minimum required limit, which is 0.7. In detail, the Purchasing Decision variable has a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.937 and Composite Reliability of 0.939, the Viral Marketing variable of 0.883 and 0.883, the Trust variable of 0.924 and 0.925, and the Influencer Marketing variable of 0.910 and 0.911.

These values indicate that all constructs have excellent internal consistency, exceeding the recommended reliability threshold in SEM analysis, which is ≥ 0.7 . Furthermore, Cronbach's Alpha values approaching or exceeding 0.9 for several variables indicate a very high level of reliability.

2. Inner model test

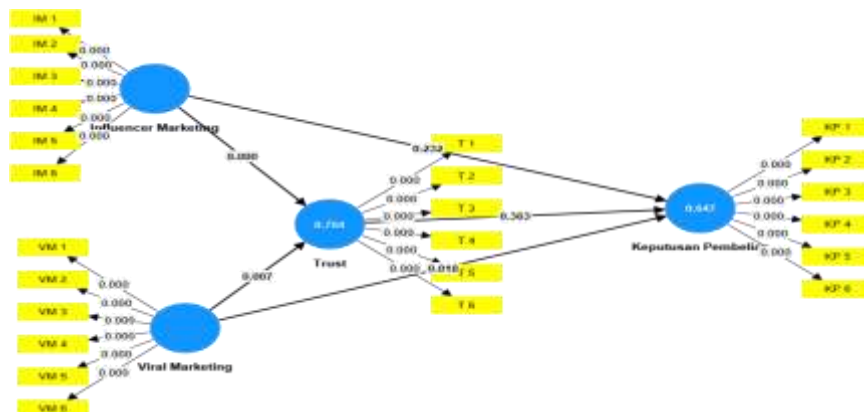


Figure 2. Inner Model

In this inner model analysis, we will test the Coefficient Determinant, Effect Size Test and Goodness of Fit Test.

a. Determinant Coefficient

Table 4.R Square Value
Source: Processed Primary Data, 2026

Variables	R Square	R Adjusted
<i>Trust</i> (Mediation)	0.704	0.696
Purchase Decision (Y)	0.647	0.633

d on table 4 above,for the Trust (Z) variable is 0.704 or 70.4%, while the Adjusted R Square value is 0.696. Furthermore, the R^2 (R-square) value for the Purchase Decision (Y) variable is 0.647 or 64.7% with an Adjusted R Square value of 0.633. All R-square values are included in the moderate to strong category, which means that the endogenous variables can be well explained by the independent variables in this research model. Thus, the variation in Trust is in the strong category, while the Purchase Decision is in the moderate category, thus indicating that the research model has quite good predictive ability.

b. *Effect Size Test*

Table 5.F Square Value

Variables	F Square
<i>Influencer Marketing => Trust</i>	0.511
<i>Viral marketing => Trust</i>	0.118
<i>Influencer Marketing =>Buying decision</i>	0.069
<i>Viral marketing =>Buying decision</i>	0.178
<i>Trust =>Buying decision</i>	0.023

Source: Primary Data processed, 2026

Based on table 5 above, the f-square value is used to see the magnitude of the influence between variables, variables *Influencer Marketing* on Trust has an F Square value of 0.511 (Sufficient), Viral marketing on Trust has an F Square value of 0.118 (Small), Influencer Marketing on Purchasing Decisions 0.069 (Small), and Viral marketing on Purchasing Decisions 0.178 (Sufficient). And finally the influence of Trust on Purchasing Decisions has a value of 0.023 (Small).

c. *Goodness of Fit Test*

*Goodness of Fit Test*In this research, the Q-Square value was used as a benchmark.The following are the results of the Q-Square calculations in this study:

$$\begin{aligned}
 Q\ Square &= 1 - [(1 - R_{21}) \times (1 - R_{21})] \\
 &= 1 - [(1 - 0.647) \times (1 - 0.704)] \\
 &= 1 - 0.325 \times 0.296
 \end{aligned}$$

$$= 1 - 0.0962$$

$$= 0.903$$

From the calculation of the Q Square value above, it shows that Q^2 value of 0.903, this shows that the value Q^2 is greater than 0, so this model has predictive relevance.

3. Hypothesis Testing

Table 6. Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Influence	T-Statistic	P-Values	Information
H1	<i>InfluencerMarketing</i> => Trust	5,822	0,000	Accepted
H2	<i>Viral marketing</i> => Trust	2,370	0.018	Accepted
H3	<i>InfluencerMarketing</i> =>Buying decision	1,194	0.232	Rejected
H4	<i>Viral marketing</i> =>Buying decision	2,370	0.018	Accepted
H5	<i>Trust</i> =>Buying decision	0.910	0.363	Rejected
H6	<i>InfluencerMarketing</i> => Trust =>Buying decision	0.844	0.399	Rejected
H7	<i>Viral marketing</i> => Trust =>Buying decision	0.892	0.372	Rejected

Source: Processed Primary Data, 2026

Based on the data presented in table 6 above, it states that the test *path coefficient* explains that there are three accepted hypotheses, namely: *InfluencerMarketing* on Trust has a P-Value of 0.000 which is less than 0.05 and a T-statistic of $5.822 > 1.96$, *Viral marketing* on Trust has a P-Value of 0.018 which is less than 0.05 and a T-statistic of $2.370 > 1.96$, and *Viral marketing* on Purchasing Decisions has a P-value of 0.018, which is less than 0.05, and a T-statistic of $2.370 > 1.96$. Meanwhile, there are four other hypotheses that are rejected, namely: *InfluencerMarketing* on Purchasing Decisions has a P-Value of 0.232 which is more than 0.05 and a T-statistic of $1.194 < 1.96$, Trust on Purchasing Decisions has a P-Value of 0.363 which is more than 0.05 and a T-statistic of $0.910 < 1.96$, *InfluencerMarketing* on Purchase Decisions mediated by Trust has a P-Value of 0.399 which is more than 0.05 and a T-statistic of $0.844 < 1.96$, and finally *Viral marketing* on Purchasing Decisions *Which* mediated by Trust has a P-Value of 0.372, which is more than 0.05 and a T-statistic of $0.892 < 1.96$.

DISCUSSION

1. The Influence of Influencer Marketing on Trust

The analysis results show that the hypothesis testing that has been conducted, it is known that Influencer Marketing has a positive and significant effect on Trust. This can be seen by comparing the t-test value, namely the t statistic of 65.822 which is greater than the t table of 1.96, and the p value of 0.000 which means it is smaller than 0.05. Therefore, from the bootstrapping test value, it can be concluded that the 6 indicators in the Influencer Marketing variable have a positive and significant effect on trust.

This indicates that the better the influencer marketing strategy implemented by Glad2Glow, the higher the level of consumer trust in the product itself. In Glad2Glow, influencers play a role in conveying product information in a more personal and persuasive manner. Consumers tend to trust product recommendations from influencers more, especially if the influencers possess a high level of credibility and appeal.

The results of this study also align with previous research by Oktaviani et al., 2025, which found that influencer marketing positively influences trust in Go-Food. Therefore, as expected, Hypothesis 1 is accepted.

2. The Influence of Viral Marketing on Trust

The analysis results show that the hypothesis testing conducted revealed that viral marketing has a positive and significant effect on trust. This can be seen by comparing the t-test value, namely the t-statistic of 2.370, which is greater than the t-table of 1.96, and the p-value of 0.018, which means it is smaller than 0.05. Therefore, from the bootstrapping test value, it can be concluded that the six indicators in the viral marketing variable have a positive and significant effect on trust.

For Glad2Glow products, viral marketing plays a role in expanding the reach of information through digital media, particularly social media. The rapid and widespread dissemination of information about Glad2Glow products can create a positive perception in consumers' minds. When a product frequently appears in various content, is discussed by many users, and receives a lot of interaction, consumers tend to perceive it as having a good reputation and being trustworthy.

The results of this study also align with previous research by Chandra (2023) that found viral marketing positively influences trust. Therefore, in line with initial expectations, Hypothesis 2 is accepted.

3. The Influence of Influencer Marketing on Purchasing Decisions

The results of the analysis indicate that the hypothesis testing that has been carried out, it is known that Influencer Marketing does not have a positive and significant effect on Purchasing Decisions. This can be seen by comparing the t-test value, namely the t statistic of 1.194 which is smaller than the t table of 1.96, and the p value of 0.232 which means it is greater than 0.05. Therefore,

from the bootstrapping test value, it can be concluded that the 6 indicators in the Influencer Marketing variable do not have a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions.

Glad2Glow product consumers tend to have more rational and selective purchasing behavior. Before deciding to purchase, consumers typically consider various other aspects, such as product quality, ingredients, safety, price, user testimonials, and suitability for their skin needs. Therefore, the presence of influencers is not necessarily strong enough to push consumers to the purchasing stage.

Furthermore, another possible reason for the insignificant influence of influencer marketing is the shift in digital consumer behavior, which is becoming increasingly critical of promotional content. Consumers are now more aware that influencers often provide endorsements as part of commercial partnerships, so the promotional messages they convey may not fully influence their purchasing decisions.

The results of this study are also in line with previous research from (Satiawan et al., 2023) where the Influencer Marketing variable does not have a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions, but is different from the initial assumption, so Hypothesis 3 is rejected.

4. The Influence of Viral Marketing on Purchasing Decisions

The analysis results show that the hypothesis testing described above shows that viral marketing has a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions. This can be seen by comparing the t-test value, namely the t-statistic of 2.370, which is greater than the t-table of 1.96, and the p-value of 0.018, which means it is smaller than 0.05. Therefore, from the bootstrapping test value, it can be concluded that the six indicators in the viral marketing variable have a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions.

The viral marketing strategy implemented by Glad2Glow is able to encourage consumers in making purchasing decisions. In this study, the Viral Marketing variable is formed by six indicators that collectively reflect the ability to disseminate product information quickly, widely, and attractively through digital media. For Glad2Glow products, viral marketing plays a role as an effective form of digital marketing communication in influencing consumer behavior. Massive dissemination of information through social media can increase product exposure, build interest, and encourage consumers to consider purchasing. Consumers tend to be more easily attracted to products that frequently appear in various digital content and are widely discussed by the public.

The results of this study are also in line with previous research from (Bukit & Mayangsari, 2023) where the Viral marketing variable has a positive and significant influence on purchasing decisions, but is different from the initial assumption, so hypothesis 4 is accepted.

5. The Influence of Trust on Purchasing Decisions

The results of the analysis indicate that the hypothesis testing that has been carried out, it is known that Trust does not have a positive and significant effect on Purchasing Decisions. This can be seen by comparing the t-test value, namely the t statistic of 0.910 which is smaller than the t table of 1.96, and the p value of 0.363 which means it is greater than 0.05. Therefore, from the bootstrapping test value, it can be concluded that the 6 indicators in the Trust variable do not have a positive and significant effect on Purchasing Decisions.

With Glad2Glow products, consumer trust can be built through information about quality, safety, benefits, and brand reputation. However, when making skincare product purchasing decisions, consumers generally rely not only on trust but also consider various other, more practical and personal factors, such as skin suitability, price, active ingredients, results, promotions, and recommendations from other users.

This suggests that even though consumers believe Glad2Glow is a good and trustworthy product, they may not immediately decide to purchase if other considerations are considered more important. In the skincare industry, purchasing decisions are often influenced by each individual's specific skin needs, so trust alone isn't a sufficient factor in determining a purchase.

Furthermore, these results suggest that for Glad2Glow products, consumer trust likely plays a larger role in shaping positive brand perceptions, but it doesn't necessarily directly lead to a purchase. Consumers may believe in a product's quality but still delay or forgo a purchase for other reasons, such as not needing the product yet, wanting to compare it with other brands, or still searching for a more suitable product.

The results of this study also align with previous research by Kholidah et al., 2025, which found that trust does not positively influence purchasing decisions. Therefore, this finding contradicts initial expectations, and Hypothesis 5 is rejected.

6. The Influence of Influencer Marketing on Purchasing Decisions with Trust as a Mediator.

The analysis results indicate that the hypothesis testing conducted revealed that Influencer Marketing has a significant effect on Purchasing Decisions, with Trust acting as a mediator. This can be seen by comparing the t-test value, with a t-statistic of 0.844, which is smaller than the t-table of 1.96, and a p-value of 0.399, which is greater than 0.05.

With Glad2Glow, consumers likely already perceive the product as well-known, well-regarded, and trusted by some users. However, when consumers reach the purchasing decision stage, they tend to consider more specific and practical factors, such as skin suitability, active ingredients, price, results, promotions, and reviews from other users.

This suggests that trust in the product alone isn't enough to motivate

consumers to purchase Glad2Glow. Skincare consumers are generally more cautious because the products they purchase will be used directly on their skin, requiring more in-depth consideration before making a purchase. Therefore, even though trust has been established, purchasing decisions are still largely influenced by personal needs and an evaluation of the product's benefits.

Furthermore, these results may indicate that for Glad2Glow products, trust plays a larger role in building positive perceptions and initial consumer confidence in the brand, but it doesn't necessarily directly influence purchasing decisions. Consumers may trust a product's quality and reputation, but they won't necessarily make a purchase immediately if they don't feel it's right for them, don't need it yet, or are still comparing it with other skincare products.

The results of this study also align with previous research by Oktaviani et al., 2025, which found that trust was unable to mediate the influence of influencer marketing on purchasing decisions. Therefore, this finding contradicts initial expectations, and Hypothesis 6 is rejected.

7. The Influence of Viral Marketing on Purchasing Decisions with Trust as a Mediator.

The analysis results indicate that the hypothesis testing conducted revealed that viral marketing mediates trust and purchasing decisions. This can be seen by comparing the t-test value, with a t-statistic of 0.8892, which is smaller than the t-table of 1.96, and a p-value of 0.372, which is greater than 0.05.

The results of this study indicate that trust is not yet an effective mediator in explaining the relationship between viral marketing and purchasing decisions for Glad2Glow products. Although viral marketing can expand the dissemination of product information and increase brand exposure on social media, the trust formed from these activities is not strong enough to significantly drive consumer purchasing decisions.

In the context of skincare products like Glad2Glow, consumer purchasing decisions tend to be influenced not only by the level of trust established through viral content, but also by various other factors such as price, quality, safety, product ingredients, skin suitability, and the experiences of other users. Therefore, trust formed through viral marketing may not necessarily lead consumers to the purchase stage. The results of this study also align with previous research by Santoso & Dwijayanti (2022) that found that trust is unable to mediate viral marketing on purchasing decisions. Therefore, Hypothesis 7 is rejected, as this contradicts the initial assumption.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Based on the results of research on the influence of influencer marketing and viral marketing on purchasing decisions for Glad2Glow products with trust as a mediating variable among Generation Z in Surakarta, it can be concluded that influencer marketing and viral marketing have a positive and significant effect on

consumer trust in Glad2Glow products. However, influencer marketing does not have a significant effect on purchasing decisions, while viral marketing is proven to have a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions. In addition, trust does not have a significant effect on purchasing decisions and is unable to mediate the relationship between influencer marketing and viral marketing on purchasing decisions for Glad2Glow products. Based on these findings, further research is recommended to involve a larger number of respondents so that the research results are more accurate and representative, use different objects or characteristics of respondents to test the consistency of the results, and consider the use of moderating variables to see factors that can strengthen or weaken the relationship between variables. For Glad2Glow, it is recommended to optimize the influencer marketing strategy through more effective content and able to encourage increased consumer purchasing decisions.

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