

The Effect of Negative Reviews on the TikTok App on Repurchase Intention via Brand Trust for Skincare Products in Bandung (A Study of Generation Z Consumers)

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ABSTRACT

Negative reviews are now a significant element influencing consumer behavior when buying skincare products due to the growing usage of social media, particularly TikTok. With brand trust acting as a mediating variable among Bandung's Generation Z customers, this study aims to investigate the impact of bad reviews on repurchase intention. A survey-based quantitative research design was used. 113 respondents who were chosen by purposive sampling were given questionnaires to complete in order to collect primary data. Regression analysis, the Sobel test, validity and reliability testing, and classical assumption tests were all performed on the data using SPSS version 26. The results show that negative reviews have a negative effect on brand trust, while brand trust has a positive effect on repurchase intention. Negative reviews do not have a direct effect on repurchase intention but exert an indirect effect through brand trust as a full mediation. These results highlight the importance for skincare brands of managing negative reviews on TikTok effectively to preserve brand trust and encourage consumers' repurchase intention.

INTRODUCTION

Repurchase intention is an important indicator for companies because it reflects consumers' tendency to make repeat purchases based on their experiences, satisfaction, and perceived benefits, while also serving as a basis for predicting future consumer behavior (Andriani & Nurtjahjadi, 2025; Fahira & Ernawadi, 2024; Syahrizal & Sigarlaki, 2024; Aulia & Herawati, 2023; Maolana & Marliani, 2025). In the skincare industry, successfully maintaining repurchase intention is becoming increasingly important as the market continues to grow. Skincare sales data in Indonesia shows an increase in industry revenue from USD 7.23 billion in 2022 to USD 8.7 billion in 2025, indicating high consumer demand for skincare products (cisas.co.id, 2024).

Amid this growth, several skincare brands experienced a decline in sales following negative reviews on TikTok posted by the "Dokter Detektif" account. Based on a comparison of sales volume, the number of reviews, and product ratings on major marketplaces such as TikTok Shop, Shopee, and Tokopedia the brands Azarine, SSSkin, Jejuby, and Elsheskin saw a decline in sales performance after these reviews went viral. This phenomenon demonstrates that negative reviews from medical influencers have the potential to influence consumer perceptions of a brand. Several findings regarding alleged exaggerated claims about product ingredients such as discrepancies between claims about niacinamide and retinol content and published laboratory test results have raised consumer doubts about the credibility of the products and brands in question.

However, the effect of negative reviews on repurchase intention is not always direct. Several studies indicate that negative reviews influence repurchase intention (Ayuwandani et al., 2025; Wang et al., 2022; Rahimova, 2025), while other studies find that negative reviews do not have a significant effect on repurchase intention (Hersetyawati et al., 2021). These differing results indicate a research gap that warrants further investigation.

One factor that may explain this relationship is brand trust. Brand trust represents consumers' belief that a brand is capable of keeping its promises and consistently providing quality products or services (Khan & Fatma, 2023). When consumers have a high level of trust in a brand, they tend to maintain their repurchase intention even after receiving negative information. Conversely, negative reviews that call into question a brand's quality or honesty have the potential to lower consumer trust and ultimately affect repurchase intention.

This research extends the literature on digital marketing and consumer behavior by exploring how brand trust functions as a mediating variable in the relationship between negative reviews and repurchase intention. Furthermore, this study examines a context that has received relatively limited attention: negative reviews posted by medical influencers on TikTok. It also focuses on Generation Z consumers in Bandung, a group characterized by high levels of social media usage and skincare product consumption. Thus, this study is expected to enrich our understanding of the mechanisms through which negative reviews influence repurchase intention via brand trust in the era of digital marketing.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Negative Reviews and Brand Trust

According to Le & Ha (2021), negative reviews are unfavorable information intended to influence individuals. Sparks & Browning (2011) state that initial negative information appears to have a dominant influence on shaping consumer perceptions, especially when the overall tone of the review is negative.

According to Liu et al. (2024), negative reviews are assessed based on “information richness,” which includes: (1) text length/depth, (2) supporting media, and (3) information complexity.

Research conducted by Zhang & Huang (2024) shows that the negative review variable has a positive and significant effect on brand trust. Furthermore, research conducted by Huaman-Ramirez et al. (2022) also demonstrates a significant effect of negative reviews on brand trust. Research by Sansome et al. (2025) indicates a positive and significant relationship between negative reviews and brand trust. Meanwhile, research by Bign et al. (2023) shows that negative reviews have a negative effect on brand trust.

H1: Negative reviews have a negative effect on brand trust.

Brand Trust and Repurchase Intention

According to Khan & Fatma (2023), brand trust is defined as the average consumer’s willingness to trust a brand’s ability to fulfill its promises or functions. Heim et al. (2023) explain that brand trust is considered a construct involving various dimensions, including consumers’ evaluations of a brand’s trustworthiness and reputation in delivering the promised value.

Delgado-Ballester et al. (2003) assert that brand trust has two dimensions, namely: (1) reliability (the ability to fulfill its promises), and (2) intentions (the brand’s good intentions toward consumers).

According to research by Sun & Moon (2024), brand trust has a positive and significant effect on repurchase intention. Brand trust has a positive and significant effect on repurchase intention (Jeffry et al., 2023).

H2: Brand trust has a positive and significant effect on repurchase intention.

Negative Reviews and Repurchase Intention

According to Istanbulluoglu & Sakman (2024), repurchase intention is defined as a prediction indicating consumers’ future tendency to make repeat purchases of a product offered by a company. There are three indicators for assessing repurchase intention: always being the top choice when shopping, being ready to buy again, and recommending the product to others (Purnapardi & Indarwati, 2022).

Negative reviews have a positive effect on repurchase intention (Ayuwandani et al., 2024). Furthermore, repurchase intention is positively influenced by negative reviews (Wang et al., 2022). This is also supported by Rahimova (2025), who states that negative reviews have a positive effect on repurchase intention. Meanwhile, a study conducted by Hersetyawati et al. (2021) showed that negative reviews do not affect repurchase intention.

H3: Negative reviews do not affect repurchase intention.

Negative Reviews, Brand Trust and Repurchase Intention

Based on research by Anggraeni & Albari (2024), brand trust mediates the effect of negative reviews on repurchase intention.

H4: Brand trust mediates the effect of negative reviews on repurchase intention.

Customers' responses to negative reviews may differ between generations due to differences in digital media consumption, consumer experience, information processing, and purchasing behavior. Generation Z, Generation Y (Millennials), and Generation X may receive and respond to negative information about products and companies differently depending on their technical and social experiences.

For Generation Z, social media and user generated content such comments and recommendations on websites like TikTok are crucial. Meanwhile, Millennials and Generation X may utilize social media differently, rely more on online reviews, and evaluate company information differently. As a result, negative reviews may have varying effects on brand trust and repurchase intention among various generations.

However, there are currently few studies that compare different generations. In order to examine differences in how consumers respond to negative reviews, future studies may compare Generation Z, Generation Y (Millennials), and Generation X. With an emphasis on Generation Z, this study investigates how negative TikTok reviews affect brand trust and repurchase intention.

Research Framework

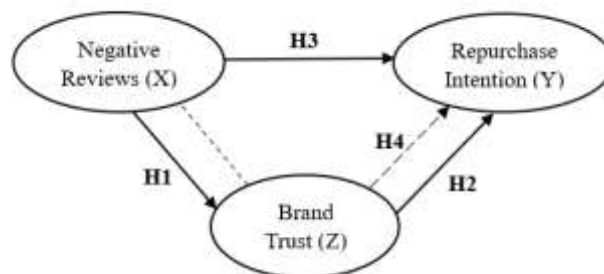


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

METHODOLOGY

This study employs a quantitative approach thru a survey method to examine the effect of negative reviews on repurchase intention among skincare product customers, with brand trust serving as a mediating variable. Primary data was collected using an online survey that was distributed via Google Forms to individuals who met the study's conditions.

Generation Z people in Bandung between the ages of 17-28 who actively use TikTok, are familiar with skincare product reviews from the Dokter Detektif account, and have made skincare product purchases made up the study population. Purposive sampling using a non-probability sampling strategy was the method employed. There were 113 responders in the sample.

The data was analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Using a 1–5 Likert scale, descriptive analysis was utilized to characterize the

research variables and the traits of the respondents. Simple linear regression was used in inferential analysis to examine how bad reviews affected brand trust, and multiple linear regression was used to examine how negative reviews and brand trust affected repurchase intention. The Sobel test was used for mediation analysis. Validity and reliability tests as well as traditional assumption tests, such as tests for heteroscedasticity, multicollinearity, and normality, were performed before hypothesis testing. SPSS version 26 was used for all data analysis, with a significance level of 5%.

RESEARCH RESULT

Validity Test

Using Pearson product moment correlation, the validity test yields the following outcomes:

Table 1. Results of the Validity Test

Variable	Items	r count	r table	Description
Negative Reviews (X)	X.1	0,687	0,3061	Valid
	X.2	0,693	0,3061	Valid
	X.3	0,611	0,3061	Valid
	X.4	0,623	0,3061	Valid
	X.5	0,678	0,3061	Valid
	X.6	0,643	0,3061	Valid
	X.7	0,683	0,3061	Valid
Repurchase Intention (Y)	Y.1	0,816	0,3061	Valid
	Y.2	0,819	0,3061	Valid
	Y.3	0,814	0,3061	Valid
Brand Trust (Z)	Z.1	0,755	0,3061	Valid
	Z.2	0,745	0,3061	Valid
	Z.3	0,790	0,3061	Valid
	Z.4	0,737	0,3061	Valid

Reliability Test

The reliability test utilized in this study is Cronbach's Alpha (α), and a variable is deemed reliable if its value is greater than 0.60.

Table 2. Result of the Reliability Test

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items	Description
Negative Reviews (X)	0,783	7	Reliable
Repurchase Intention (Y)	0,749	3	Reliable
Brand Trust (Z)	0,751	4	Reliable

Normality Test Result

To ascertain whether the regression model's residuals were normal, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov (K-S) test was employed. If the significance criterion is greater than 0.05, the residuals are considered to be regularly distributed.

Table 3. Result of the Normality Test

Model	Kolmogorov-Smirnov	df	Sig.
Residual 1 ($X \rightarrow Z$)	0,071	113	0,200
Residual 2 ($X, Z \rightarrow Y$)	0,078	113	0,085

The residuals in the first model ($X \rightarrow Z$) have a significance value of 0.200, according to the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test results, whereas the residuals in the second model (X and Z against Y) have a significance value of 0.085. Since both values are greater than the significance level of 0.05, the residuals of both models are considered to be regularly distributed.

Multicollinearity Test Result

The multicollinearity test's objective is to determine whether the independent variables in the regression model are correlated.

Table 4. Result of the Multicollinearity Test

Variable	Tolerance	VIF	Conclusion
Negative Reviews (X)	0.933	1.072	No Multicollinearity
Brand Trust (Z)	0.933	1.072	No Multicollinearity

The multicollinearity test findings show that the two independent variables, Negative Reviews (X) and Brand Trust (Z), have tolerance values of 0.933 and VIF values of 1.072, respectively. If the tolerance value is significantly higher than 0.10 and the VIF value is significantly lower than 10, there is no multicollinearity issue in the regression model.

Heteroscedasticity Test Results

To determine whether or not there is heteroscedasticity in a model, the following table shows the SPSS output from this study:

Table 5. Results of the Heteroscedasticity Test

Variable	B	t	Sig.
(Constant)	1,851	2,510	0,014
Negative Reviews (X)	0,001	0,047	0,963
Brand Trust (Z)	-0,070	-2,060	0,042

The Negative Reviews variable (X) has a significance value of 0.963, which is significantly higher than the 0.05 threshold, according to the Glejser test results. As a result, it has no discernible impact on the absolute residuals. When evaluated separately using the Glejser test, the Brand Trust variable (Z) has a significance value of 0.042, which is less than 0.05, suggesting a possible hint of heteroscedasticity. However, the more thorough Breusch-Pagan test was used to assess the total regression model because the Glejser test can be sensitive to certain predictor variables. The second model (X and Z vs Y) produced significant values of 0.215 (Normal) and 0.112 (Robust) from the Breusch-Pagan

test, both of which are higher than the 0.05 significance level. As a result, the assumption of homoscedasticity can be deemed satisfied because there is no discernible heteroscedasticity in the overall model. However, these results should be interpreted cautiously because different heteroscedasticity tests may yield somewhat different results because of their varying sensitivity and statistical assumptions. The Breusch-Pagan test, which is one of several methods available, was the main tool used in this study to evaluate the overall model. To further verify the robustness of the regression assumptions, future studies are advised to use more diagnostic techniques or larger and more varied samples.

Multiple Linear Regression Analysis Test Result

The results of the multiple linear regression analysis are as follows:

Table 6. Multiple Linear Resgression Analysis

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T Value	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	-1.098	1.330		-0.825	0.411
Negative Reviews	0.059	0.040	0.104	1.489	0.139
Brand Trust	0.636	0.061	0.727	10.426	<0.001

a. Dependent Variable: Total Repurchase Intention

The multiple linear regression equation is as follows.

$$Y = -1.098 + 0.059 X + 0.636 Z$$

The following is an explanation of the multiple linear regression equation:

1. The constant value of -1.098 indicates that if the Negative Reviews (X) and Brand Trust (Z) variables are predicted to remain constant or equal to zero, the Repurchase Intention (Y) value is projected to be -1.098.
2. If Brand Trust remains constant, Repurchase Intention will increase by 0.059 units for each unit increase in the Negative Reviews variable (X), according to the regression coefficient. However, according to a calculated t-value of 1.489 and a significance value of 0.139 (> 0.05), this effect is not significant; therefore, Repurchase Intention is unaffected by Negative Reviews.
3. According to the regression coefficient of the Brand Trust (Z) variable, which is 0.636, the Repurchase Intention score will increase by 0.636 units for each unit increase in the Brand Trust assessment score, assuming Negative Reviews remain constant. The significance value of < 0.001 (< 0.05) indicates that this effect is positive and statistically significant.
4. The Standardized Coefficients (Beta) results show that Brand Trust has a standardized coefficient of 0.727 and Negative Reviews has a standardized coefficient of 0.104. This implies that brand trust has a greater impact on repurchase intention than negative reviews.

DISCUSSION

The Effect of Negative Reviews on Brand Trust

This study found that negative reviews on TikTok have a negative effect on brand trust among Generation Z consumers who use skincare products in Bandung. A regression coefficient of -0.169 indicates that a one-unit increase in the perception of negative reviews reduces brand trust by 0.169 units, assuming all other variables remain constant. The significance value of 0.006 is below the 0.05 threshold. This finding aligns with the characteristics of the negative reviews examined, namely content presented in detail, supported by visual evidence, and using clear and easy-to-understand narratives. Such information has the potential to raise doubts about product claims and concerns regarding product safety, thereby reducing consumer trust in the brand. Additionally, TikTok's characteristics which enable the rapid and widespread dissemination of information further amplify the impact of negative reviews on consumer perceptions. The findings of this study reinforce those of other studies showing that negative reviews have a negative effect on brand trust (Bign et al., 2023).

The Effect of Brand Trust on Repurchase Intention

This study found that brand trust has a positive and significant effect on repurchase intention among Generation Z consumers who use skincare products in Bandung. A regression coefficient of 0.613, with a t-value of 10.338 and a p-value below 0.001, indicates a very strong effect. The R-squared value of 0.491 indicates that nearly half of the variation in Repurchase Intention can be explained by Brand Trust alone. In this study, brand trust was measured through consumers' confidence in the consistency of product quality, the brand's reliability in meeting skincare needs, the alignment of the product with its promised claims, and the belief that the brand will not harm consumers. These four aspects reflect consumers' trust in the brand, which plays a role in maintaining loyalty; thus, consumers with high levels of brand trust tend to continue repurchasing without seeking alternative brands. These findings support previous research (Sun and Moon, 2024; Jeffry et al., 2023) stating that brand trust has a positive influence on repurchase intention.

The Effect of Negative Reviews on Repurchase Intention

This study found that negative reviews do not have a direct effect on repurchase intention among Generation Z consumers who use skincare products in Bandung. ($B = -0.048$, $t = -0.892$, $p = 0.374$). An R-squared value of only 0.007 confirms that almost no variance in repurchase intention can be directly explained by negative reviews. This phenomenon indicates that repurchase decisions in the skincare industry are not influenced by a single piece of negative information. Consumers who have had positive experiences and trust a particular brand tend to be more resilient to negative reviews from others. Therefore, the influence of negative reviews on repurchase intention occurs more indirectly through changes in the level of consumer trust in the brand. These findings support the research by Hersetyawati et al. (2021), which showed that negative reviews do not have a significant effect on repurchase intention.

Brand Trust in Mediating the Effect of Negative Reviews on Repurchase Intention

This study found that brand trust fully mediates the effect of negative reviews on repurchase intention. The indirect effect of -0.1074 , with a Boot CI of $[-0.1802; -0.0337]$ that does not include zero, confirms that this mediation is statistically significant. This pattern of full mediation occurs because the direct effect of negative reviews on repurchase intention, after controlling for brand trust, is no longer significant ($B = 0.059$, $p = 0.139$), while the total effect is also not significant ($B = -0.048$, $p = 0.374$). These mediation findings have important theoretical and practical implications. Theoretically, the results indicate that the influence of negative reviews on repurchase intention occurs through brand trust as a mediating mechanism. In other words, negative reviews affect consumers' level of trust in the brand, which in turn impacts repurchase intention. Practically, these findings suggest that skincare brands with high levels of consumer trust are better equipped to withstand the impact of negative reviews on social media. Therefore, efforts to build and maintain brand trust are a key strategy for minimizing the negative impact of reviews circulating on platforms such as TikTok. These findings support the research by Anggraeni & Albari (2024), which suggests that brand trust mediates the effect of negative reviews on repurchase intention.

CONCLUSIONS RECOMMENDATIONS

This study investigated the effect of negative reviews on repurchase intention among Bandung's Generation Z skincare product users using brand trust as a mediating variable. The following conclusions can be made in light of the research findings:

1. Negative reviews have a negative effect on brand trust among Generation Z consumers who use skincare products in Bandung. The study's findings demonstrate that negative reviews have an impact on consumers' level of trust in a skincare business. Customers' degree of trust in a brand decreases when they are exposed to more negative information.
2. Brand trust has a positive and significant effect on repurchase intention among Generation Z consumers who use skincare products in Bandung. The study's findings demonstrate that brand trust affects customers' level of repurchase intention. When consumers have more faith in a brand, they are more inclined to make repurchase intention.
3. Negative reviews do not directly influence repurchase intention among Generation Z consumers who use skincare products in Bandung. The results of this study show that other factors, especially the degree of consumer trust in the brand, have an impact on consumers' desire to repurchase rather than the existence of negative reviews.
4. Brand trust fully mediates the effect of negative reviews on repurchase intention among Generation Z consumers who use skincare products in Bandung. The study's findings demonstrate that negative reviews indirectly influence consumers' intentions to make additional purchases by fostering brand trust. Because of this, brand trust is crucial to

comprehending how negative reviews may affect consumers' willingness to repurchase skincare goods.

For skincare companies, these results emphasize the significance of establishing and preserving brand trust as a crucial tactic for cultivating customer loyalty. Companies need to guarantee a constant level of product quality, communicate product information transparently, and immediately and expertly address customer reviews and complaints in order to preserve brand credibility.

In addition, companies need to improve their management of digital communications and social media activities to minimize the negative impact of reviews that could potentially influence consumer perceptions. Providing precise, instructive, and fact-based information helps boost customers' trust in the caliber and security of goods.

ADVANCED RESEARCH

This study has some drawbacks. First, because the study was restricted to Bandung based Generation Z consumers, its conclusions cannot be applied to customers in other age groups or regions. Second, the study focused solely on the variables of negative reviews, brand trust, and repurchase intention; therefore, there are other factors that could potentially influence consumers' repurchase intentions. Third, the scope of the study was limited to skincare products and negative reviews circulating on the TikTok platform.

In light of these constraints, it is recommended that future research include participants from various generations and geographical regions in order to get more representative results. To give a more comprehensive knowledge of the elements influencing repurchase intention, future study may also include other variables like brand image, customer satisfaction, perceived quality, electronic word of mouth (e-WOM), or customer loyalty. Additionally, future studies could be conducted on other product categories or different social media platforms to test the consistency of the findings in a broader context.

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