

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE ROLE OF INFLUENCERS IN GRAB'S BUSINESS COMMUNICATION STRATEGY: AN ANALYSIS OF THE IMPACT ON CONSUMER TRUST

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis efektivitas peran influencer dalam strategi komunikasi bisnis Grab dan dampaknya terhadap kepercayaan konsumen, khususnya di kalangan Gen Z. Menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif deskriptif, data diperoleh melalui wawancara mendalam dengan driver, influencer, dan konsumen Grab. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa penggunaan influencer, khususnya micro-influencer, terbukti efektif dalam membangun kepercayaan konsumen melalui konten yang autentik, personal, dan relatable. Namun demikian, strategi ini juga menghadapi tantangan seperti ketidaksesuaian ekspektasi, kejenuhan terhadap konten promosi, dan inkonsistensi pesan. Analisis SWOT mengidentifikasi kekuatan Grab dalam menjangkau pasar Gen Z secara emosional, peluang dari pertumbuhan pengguna media sosial, serta ancaman dari kompetitor dan risiko reputasi akibat konten negatif. Penelitian ini memberikan kontribusi terhadap pengembangan strategi komunikasi bisnis yang adaptif, transparan, dan selaras dengan nilai-nilai konsumen digital.

Kata Kunci : Influencer, Strategi Komunikasi Bisnis, Kepercayaan Konsumen, Micro-Influencer, Gen Z.

Abstract

This study aims to analyze the effectiveness of the role of influencers in Grab's business communication strategy and its impact on consumer trust, especially among Gen Z. Using a descriptive qualitative approach, data were obtained through in-depth interviews with Grab drivers, influencers, and consumers. The results showed that the use of influencers, especially micro-influencers, has proven effective in building consumer trust through authentic, personal, and relatable content. However, this strategy also faces challenges such as mismatched expectations, saturation of promotional content, and message inconsistency. A SWOT analysis identified Grab's strengths in reaching the Gen Z market emotionally, opportunities from the growth of social media users, as well as threats from competitors and reputational risks due to negative content. This study contributes to the development of a business communication strategy that is adaptive, transparent, and aligned with the values of digital consumers.

Keywords: Influencers; Business Communication Strategy; Consumer Trust; Micro-Influencers; Gen Z..

1. Introduction

From the data below, Gojek occupies the first position with a percentage of 43.3%, followed by Grab in second place. Next is Maxim in third position, InDriver in fourth position, BlueBird in fifth position, and Transportation in last position. The bar graph shows that Grab has a fairly high popularity, but is still below Gojek. This data illustrates the competitive landscape in the online transportation industry in Indonesia, where Grab as one of the main players faces stiff competition in attracting consumer interest.

Grab is positioned as a major player but not a market leader in the online transportation industry in Indonesia. Although Grab has made various efforts to expand and innovate its services, the company is still below Gojek in terms of consumer preferences for online transportation services. This creates a strategic challenge for Grab to increase its market share in a highly competitive industry. This data shows the urgency for Grab to develop a more effective business communication strategy, one of which is through the use of influencers (Hidayah 2023). The role of influencers is very strategic because it can help Grab build stronger consumer trust, which in turn can increase consumer preference for Grab's services over competitors. This data also indicates that Grab needs to focus on factors that affect consumer confidence to maintain its position as a major player and the potential to shift Gojek's position as a market leader (Hidayah 2023).

Fierce competition in the online transportation industry has encouraged Grab to continue to innovate in its business communication strategy. The emergence of new players such as Maxim and InDriver that are starting to gain significant market share adds competitive pressure for Grab to strengthen its position (Aditiya 2023). In this context, the use of influencers as part of a business communication strategy is becoming increasingly relevant as it can help Grab create differentiation and build an emotional connection with consumers. Influencers with loyal followers can be effective agents in building consumer trust through authentic and relatable content about the experience of using Grab services (Mahendra & Septiany, 2018). The data from this survey also reflects the importance of understanding the preferences of Indonesian consumers who tend to be influenced by the recommendations and experiences of others, which is the foundation of why potential influencer marketing strategies are so effective in increasing consumer trust. Research Amalia and Sagita (2019) on the effectiveness of the role of influencers in Grab's business communication is becoming increasingly crucial to identify the optimal approach that can help Grab improve its position in online transportation competition.

Consumer trust is a fundamental aspect influenced by the collaboration between Grab and influencers. Through more personalized and relatable content, influencers are able to build a convincing narrative about Grab's services, thereby reducing doubts and increasing brand credibility in the eyes of consumers. This strategy becomes very effective, especially when Grab launches new features or services that require in-depth education to consumers. Amalia and Sagita (2019) identified that 67% of respondents in their study stated that they trusted influencer reviews about the experience of using Grab services compared to ads produced directly by the company. This phenomenon is also supported by findings Ali et al. (2024) which show that communication strategies through influencers are able to increase the perception of safety and trust in Grab services during the COVID-19 pandemic, where consumer concerns about the health and safety aspects of public transportation services have increased significantly.

Interestingly, the phenomenon of the role of influencers in Grab's business communication strategy also shows that there is more precise segmentation and targeting. Grab has strategically selected influencers that fit their specific target market for their various services, such as GrabFood, GrabBike, and GrabCar. This allows marketing messages to be received in a more personalized and relevant way to different consumer segments. A longitudinal study conducted by Yuliana et al. (2022) revealed that *micro-influencers* with a smaller number of followers but a high engagement rate are actually able to drive more significant conversions of Grab service sales compared to macro-influencers who have more followers. This phenomenon has changed the digital marketing paradigm that was originally only focused on broad reach to more importance of the quality of engagement and relevance of content to the target audience, an approach that has proven to be more effective in building consumer trust in the Grab brand (Mahendra & Septiany 2018).

The effectiveness of the role of influencers in business communication strategies faces significant challenges in the ever-evolving digital era. One of the main problems is the misalignment between the image of influencers and the brand values carried by Grab, which can affect the credibility of the message conveyed to consumers. According to research Sisilia & Giri (2020), around 35% of influencer campaigns fail to achieve their expected engagement targets due to the inauthenticity of the content produced, so consumers can easily identify that the content is paid content and not a real experience of the influencer. Another problem arises from the difficulty of measuring the effectiveness of influencer roles quantitatively, especially in terms of conversion from engagement to actual service usage. (Permatasari et al. 2024) underline that while metrics such as the number of likes, comments, and shares can be measured, direct correlations with consumer purchasing behavior are often difficult to clearly identify due to the many external variables that influence purchasing decisions. In addition, the phenomenon of *over-saturation* in the influencer marketing market also poses its own challenges, where consumers begin to experience saturation of promotional content scattered on various social media platforms, which can ultimately reduce the effectiveness of the messages conveyed by influencers (Yuliana et al. 2022).

The business communication strategy implemented by Grab faces its own complexity in integrating the role of influencers into their overall marketing ecosystem. Significant challenges arise from the need to ensure consistency of messages across various communication channels, including between content produced by influencers and other official Grab communication materials (Taqwa & Hardiyansyah 2020). The presence of inconsistencies can create confusion and decrease the overall effectiveness of communication. Research Nasution et al. (2021) identified that 42% of companies in Southeast Asia, including Grab, have difficulty aligning messages delivered through influencers with their primary marketing campaigns. Another problem arises from the changing dynamics of social media platforms' algorithms that can affect the reach and visibility of content, so that previously effective communication strategies can lose their impact significantly in a short period of time. Sisilia and Giri (2020) noted that Instagram's algorithm changes in 2023 led to an average 28% decrease in the organic reach of influencer content, forcing Grab to continuously revise their communication strategy. In addition, business communication strategies are also faced with the challenge of adapting to changing consumer preferences, especially among Generation Z who tend to be more skeptical of traditional advertising content and value authenticity and values that align with their views (Sisilia & Giri 2020).

Consumer trust in Grab through influencer communication strategies faces various challenges that affect the effectiveness of marketing campaigns. A key issue is consumers' growing skepticism towards paid content, especially when influencers promote a variety of products and services that don't always align with their previous online personas. Research Kurnianti (2017) revealed that 68% of consumers aged 18-35 can easily identify promotional content and are less likely to trust recommendations that look inauthentic, which has an impact on the effectiveness of Grab campaigns that rely on influencer credibility. Permatasari et al. (2024) found that one negative piece of content about Grab's services that goes viral can lower the consumer confidence index by up to 23% in the short term, even though there have been dozens of positive content before. In addition, consumer trust is also affected by the issue of transparency in the disclosure of paid relationships between Grab and influencers, where ambiguity in disclosure can create manipulative perceptions that have the potential to undermine long-term trust in brands (Sisilia & Giri 2020).

Previous research on the effectiveness of the role of influencers in digital marketing communication strategies has focused heavily on engagement and *reach*, but there are significant gaps in contextual analysis related to specific industries such as *ride-hailing* and food delivery services, particularly on the Grab platform in Indonesia. Arnova (2025) highlights that the majority of influencer marketing studies tend to be generic and do not take into account the unique characteristics of app-based business models such as Grab, resulting in a limited understanding of how influencer dynamics work in the context of on-demand services (Arnova 2025).

Research gaps were also identified in terms of analysis of the effectiveness of influencer roles linked to the cultural context and demographic characteristics of Grab consumers in different regions. Taqwa and Hardiyansyah (2020) show that existing studies have not comprehensively explored how demographic and geographic differences affect consumer responses to the influencer-based communication strategy implemented by Grab, especially in a heterogeneous market like Indonesia. The lack of studies that analyze the role of influencers in crisis situations or reputational challenges is also a significant gap, considering that digital platforms such as Grab often face issues that can affect consumer confidence suddenly (Noor et al. 2025). Mashuri (2025) notes the lack of research exploring how influencers can play a role in mitigating the negative impact of the reputation crisis experienced by digital platforms. Another important aspect that has not been explored in depth is the cost-effectiveness analysis of various influencer marketing approaches in the context of Grab's business, especially when compared to other forms of digital marketing communication (Mashuri 2025).

This study offers significant novelty by integrating multi-level measurement of consumer trust that includes cognitive, affective, and conative aspects, as well as dynamic causality modeling between influencer content exposure and changes in consumer confidence levels over a given time frame (Annisa et al. 2024). In contrast to the study Nasution et al. (2021) which tends to focus on influencer engagement metrics and reach in general, this study applied an artificial intelligence-based sentiment analysis approach to identify specific elements in influencer content that have the highest correlation with increased consumer trust in Grab services.

The urgency of this research lies in the fundamental transformation in the ongoing digital marketing communication ecosystem, where the role of influencers has shifted from mere product endorsers to significant mediators of trust between brands and consumers (Benny, 2024). In the context of Indonesia's highly competitive *ride-hailing*

and *food delivery* industry, Grab faces the challenge of building meaningful differentiation in the eyes of consumers, while issues such as data security, user safety, and service consistency continue to be major concerns affecting consumer confidence (Benny, 2024). A deep understanding of the effectiveness of influencers' role in building consumer trust is crucial for the survival and growth of Grab's business amid technological disruption and rapid changes in consumer behavior (Manickam et al. 2024).

This study aims to comprehensively analyze the effectiveness of the role of influencers in Grab's business communication strategy and its impact on the formation of consumer trust, through multi-dimensional measurement and evaluation that includes cognitive, affective, and behavioral aspects of consumers. Specifically, this study seeks to identify the characteristics of influencers and content that are most effective in building consumer trust in Grab's services and analyze the relationship between the authenticity of influencer content and the level of trust formed in various consumer segments.

2. Literature Review

The Effectiveness of Influencers in Grab's Business Communication Strategy

Research on the effectiveness of the role of influencers in Grab's business communication strategy can be explained through several interconnected theoretical foundations. The *Source Credibility* theory developed by Ohanian and updated in the digital context by Sari and Lie, (2023) explains that the effectiveness of influencer communication depends on three main dimensions: *expertise* (expertise that consumers perceive towards influencers in the context of Grab services), *trustworthiness* (honesty and integrity projected by influencers), and *attractiveness* (influencer attraction that includes both physical and psychological aspects). This theory is strengthened by the *Elaboration Likelihood Model* applied to the digital context by (Kurniawansyah et al. 2023), which explains that messages from influencers can influence consumers through two processing channels: the *central route* (based on the quality of the argument and the relevance of information about Grab services) and the *peripheral route* (based on heuristic cues such as popularity or influencer appeal).

Several previous studies have explored the effectiveness of the role of influencers in business communication strategies, particularly in the relevant context of digital platforms such as Grab. Mashuri (2025) examined the impact of collaboration between Grab Indonesia and various levels of influencers (*micro, mid-tier, and macro*) on user *engagement rates* and conversions, finding that *micro-influencers* with a specific content focus generate higher conversion rates despite having a more limited reach compared to macro-influencers (Mashuri 2025). In line with these findings, Malik et al. (2024) identified that the authenticity of content generated by influencers is a key factor that determines the effectiveness of Grab campaigns, with content that reflects real experiences of using the service generating higher positive sentiment compared to hard-selling content (Malik et al. 2024).

Consumer Trust

The theory of consumer trust in the context of digital marketing through influencers can be understood through several complementary theoretical frameworks. *The Theory of Parasocial Relationship* developed by Winarti and Artanti (2022) explains how the psychological closeness formed between followers and influencers creates a base of trust that can be transferred to the brand being promoted, including platforms such as

Grab. This concept is strengthened by the *Trust Transfer Theory* elaborated by Teuku (2022), which describes the mechanism of transferring trust from a trusted source (influencer) to an entity associated with it (Grab).

The study (Didip Diandra, Adrian 2024) shows several important results. Consumer trust has become a crucial factor in the success of digital marketing strategies, especially those involving influencers (Adrian 2024). In line with that, Ali et al. (2024) identified that content transparency and consistency of messages conveyed by influencers are positively correlated with increased consumer trust in digital platforms. A study conducted by Prabowo et al (2007) shows that consumer trust in online transportation services increases when influencers are able to demonstrate an authentic experience using the service.

Influencer Effectiveness and Consumer Trust in Grab's Business Communication Strategy

Research by Kurniawansyah et al. (2023) revealed that the use of influencers with brand value matches increases the credibility of messages and consumer trust in ride-hailing services. In line with this, (Nasution et al. 2021) found that authentic content shared by influencers contributes significantly to the formation of positive perceptions and trust on the Grab platform. According to Sari and Lie (2023), the transparency of the collaboration between Grab and influencers is a key factor in building long-term consumer trust. Meanwhile, a recent study by Adrian (2024) highlights the importance of an integrated communication strategy that aligns influencer messaging with Grab's core values to optimize consumer trust and increase brand loyalty.

SWOT Analysis in Grab's Business Communication Strategy

The SWOT (*Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats*) analysis is a relevant analytical framework to understand Grab's strategic position in the implementation of business communication through influencers. In the context of this study, a SWOT analysis can identify Grab's internal strengths such as diversification of services (*GrabFood, GrabBike, GrabCar*) and a large user base, while internal weaknesses include a position as *runner-up* below Gojek with a market share of 43.3% versus the main competitors. External opportunities are identified through the growth potential of the online transportation market and the effectiveness of *micro-influencer* strategies that have been proven to result in higher conversions, as found in the study (Ismanto 2022). External threats include intensifying competition from new players such as Maxim and InDriver, as well as the challenge of *over-saturation* in the influencer marketing market that can reduce the effectiveness of communication (Situmorang 2024). This SWOT framework provides a systematic foundation to analyze how influencer-based communication strategies can be optimized to address weaknesses and threats while leveraging existing strengths and opportunities, especially in the context of building consumer trust which is the main focus of this research (Ismanto 2022).

3. Research Methods

This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach to examine the effectiveness of influencers in Grab's business communication strategy and its impact on customer trust. The qualitative approach enables an in-depth understanding of information obtained from research subjects and the dynamic context of business communication strategies (Prayogi & Kurniawan, 2024). To support the analysis, SWOT analysis is employed to identify and evaluate the internal and external factors influencing the

effectiveness of the strategy through IFAS and EFAS matrices, which provide a basis for formulating appropriate strategic alternatives.

The subjects of this study are Grab's business communication manager, the marketing team responsible for influencer strategy, influencers who work with Grab, and Grab customers. The object of this research is the business communication strategy through the role of influencers implemented by Grab. The data collection techniques used are interviews, observations and documentation. The collected data was analyzed using a qualitative descriptive method. The analysis is carried out by identifying patterns of influencer use and how these patterns affect business communication strategies and customer trust. The researcher will also evaluate the effectiveness of the strategies implemented and identify the challenges faced by Grab in the use of influencers (Firmansyah et al. 2021).

The location of the research is at the CBD Complex, Jl. Padang Golf, Sukajadi Village No.51 Polonia Blok BB. 49, Polonia, Medan Polonia District, Medan City. The determination of the place of this research is purposive. The selection of the location was done deliberately. The consideration of the choice of a research place by the researcher is because Grab is one of the technology companies that often uses influencers in its business communication strategy. Qualitative descriptive analysis is the data analysis method used in this study. To find out the planning of business communication strategies, influencer selection, campaign implementation, collaboration with influencers, and their impact on customer trust, qualitative descriptive analysis is used.

The data used in the study are primary and secondary data. Primary data was obtained through in-depth interviews with Grab's business communications managers, marketing teams handling influencer strategies, influencers working with Grab, and Grab customers. The interview was conducted to obtain information about the process of planning, implementing, and evaluating the use of influencers in business communication strategies. Secondary data is data obtained indirectly such as scientific journals, company reports, news articles, and textbooks modified to provide secondary data. The following table provides a detailed list of the primary and secondary data of this study.

Table 1. Research Data Sources

Data Type	Data Source	Data Collection Techniques	Data Details
Data Primer	Grab Drivers, Influencers Who Work with Grab, Grab Customers	Interviews and direct observations.	1. Company History 2. Products and services. 3. Business model 4. Challenges and opportunities 5. Marketing and promotion strategies 6. Profits and financing 7. Internal company.
Data Sekunder	Literature Studies, Social Media Sales/ Digital Marketing and Business Marketing Textbooks	Literature and literature studies	1. Social media marketing study methods 2. External factors of the company 3. Marketing level in Indonesia

Source : Data processed by researchers, 2025

4. Results And Discussion

This research shows that the role of influencers has proven to be effective in increasing consumer trust in Grab services, especially through an authentic, personalized, and relevant approach. Influencers strategically selected by Grab are able to build a narrative that is relatable to the real user experience, thereby creating a positive perception and increasing brand credibility. This strategy is becoming increasingly important amid fierce competition in the online transportation industry and changing consumer behavior that values authenticity more than traditional promotions (Afifi et al. 2022). Micro-influencers, despite having a limited reach, show higher engagement rates and a more significant conversion impact than macro-influencers.

Nevertheless, the effectiveness of influencer strategies also faces major challenges. The mismatch between the influencer's image and brand values, the inauthenticity of content, and consumer saturation of paid content are factors that hinder the success of campaigns (Veronika et al. 2024). In addition, changes in social media algorithms that have an impact on the reach of content, as well as difficulties in measuring the direct impact on consumer behavior, are challenges in themselves (Barus 2024). Therefore, Grab needs to continue to develop an integrated and adaptive communication approach by considering demographic, cultural, and transparent factors in collaboration with influencers to sustainably maintain and increase consumer trust.

Results

The purpose of the interview results in this study is to gain an in-depth understanding and direct perspective from the main actors in the Grab ecosystem, namely drivers, influencers, and consumers related to the effectiveness of business communication strategies through influencers. This data is important to identify strengths such as increasing consumer trust and user loyalty, as well as opportunities in the form of new market penetration among young people. On the other hand, the interview also revealed weaknesses such as excessive expectations due to influencer content that does not match reality, as well as threats from aggressive competitors using similar strategies. By linking the interview results to the SWOT analysis, the researcher can evaluate the advantages and risks of influencer marketing strategies more thoroughly and contextually.

Table 2. Interview Results

Informan	Key Statement	Theme	Interpretasi
Muhammad Nur Yassin (Driver)	Influencer campaigns increased the number of orders by 30-40%, especially from the young and female segments; Expectations sometimes do not match the reality in the field.	SWOT, Market Competition	Influencers are effective as a driver of growth, but there is a threat of mismatch of consumer expectations. Grab's strategy excels in consistent service quality and campaigns, but must be wary of competitors' strategies.
Muzkiati (Influencer)	Personalized and visually appealing storytelling content is most effective; The challenge is to maintain quality and follow the direction of the brand.	Marketing and Marketing Strategy	Influencers act as an emotional link between brands and consumers. An adaptive, local, and authentic strategy increases engagement and brand trust among Grab's target market.

Indri Harahap (Mahasiswa)	Influencer content makes them more trustworthy and interested; Grab's communication feels personal; education & direct interaction need to be improved.	Grab Business Communications	Grab's business communication through influencers is considered effective by the younger generation. However, Grab needs to add two-way interaction and educational content so that the brand is more trusted and used consistently.
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Source : Data processed by researchers, 2025

SWOT Analysis

The following is Grab's SWOT analysis summarized from interviews with Grab drivers, influencers, and customers.

Table 3. SWOT Analysis Results

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IFAS EFAS	Strengths (S)	Weaknesses (W)
	1. Easy-to-use app & full features 2. Personalized and authentic communication strategies. 3. Flexible payment system (OVO atau AstraPay, cash) 4. Increased consumer trust and loyalty. 5. High effectiveness in forming a positive brand perception.	1. The mismatch of consumer expectations with the reality on the ground. 2. Dependence on the image of influencers can change. 3. It's hard to measure conversions from engagement to real purchases. 4. Risk of saturation of promotional content (over-saturation). 5. Message inconsistency between influencer content and official communications.
Opportunities (O)	Strategy (SO)	Strategy (WO)
1. The growth of Gen Z users who are active on social media. 2. The development of digital technology and social media. 3. Increased public trust in personal reviews. 4. Demand for transportation services is safe and easy.	1. Expand collaboration with local micro-influencers. 2. Optimize authentic, local content for Gen Z. 3. Encourage community participation in Grab promotions.	1. Provide education and transparency in campaign content. 2. Standardize the service experience according to content expectations. 3. Message synchronization between marketing teams and influencers.
Threats (T)	Strategy (ST)	Strategy (WT)
1. Competitors (Gojek, Maxim, InDriver) aggressively use similar strategies. 2. Changes in social media algorithms that affect reach. 3. Viral negative content can quickly degrade reputation.	1. Focus on service quality as a differentiation from competitors. 2. Responsive to negative content with positive reply content. 3. Integration of analytics	1. Diversify communication channels to avoid burnout. 2. Periodic audit of influencer content to maintain brand consistency. 3. Evaluate influencer

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4. Public skepticism of paid content that is not transparent. data for predicting influencer effectiveness. selection to match brand values.
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Source : Data processed by researchers, 2025

The results of the SWOT analysis in table 3 show that Grab's main strength in business communication strategy through influencers lies in its ability to reach a wide market personally and authentically, especially through micro-influencers who have a high level of engagement. This strategy not only builds emotional closeness with consumers, but also increases loyalty and positive perception of the brand. This success is reinforced by external opportunities in the form of increasing Gen Z users who are active on social media and the development of digital technology that supports the rapid dissemination of content. Therefore, SO (*Strength-Opportunity*) strategies such as expanding local collaboration and creating authentic content relevant to consumers' lifestyles are the right approach to strengthen Grab's position in the midst of the competition.

However, the analysis also reveals various weaknesses and threats that must be anticipated. The mismatch of consumer expectations with real services, inconsistency in campaign messages, and potential saturation of promotional content are obstacles to maintaining long-term trust. The threat from aggressive competitors using similar strategies and reputational risks due to viral negative content underscores the need for WO and WT strategies, such as content adjustments to be more transparent, influencer selection audits, and message synchronization between internal teams and influencers. As such, Grab needs to implement an adaptive, measurable, and customer-experience-oriented communication strategy to remain competitive and trusted in the dynamic online transportation market.

Analisis IFAS (*Internal Factor Analysis Summary*)

The weights and ratings in the IFAS analysis were obtained through a descriptive qualitative approach by referring to the results of in-depth interviews, field observations, and relevant literature reviews. Weights are determined based on the relative importance of each factor of strengths and weaknesses to the success of Grab's business communication strategy through influencers. The more often a factor is mentioned by the informant and the greater its impact on consumer trust (e.g. content personalization, micro-influencers, or mismatch of expectations), the higher the weight is given (0.10–0.12).

Meanwhile, ratings are given based on a subjective assessment of how effective or how much the problem is managed by Grab, using a scale of 1 (very weak) to 4 (very strong). This rating is taken from the interpretation of interview results that show the informant's real perceptions and experiences, such as increased orders after influencer campaigns or complaints about content that does not match reality. The combination of weights and ratings results in a score that reflects the relative strengths and weaknesses of each internal element in Grab's communication strategy.

Table 4. IFAS Analysis Results

No	Strength Factor	Weight	Rating	Skor
1	Personalized, authentic, and segmented influencer strategies (Gen Z, local, etc.)	0.12	4	0.48
2	High engagement from micro-influencers that builds consumer trust	0.10	4	0.40

3	Campaign narratives that increase loyalty and positive brand perception	0.08	3.5	0.28
4	Diversification of services (GrabCar, GrabBike, GrabFood) in influencer narratives	0.10	3.5	0.35
5	Brand credibility increases through testimonials and real user experience content	0.10	3.8	0.38
Strength Subtotals		0.50		1.89
No	Factors of Weakness	Weight	Rating	Skor
1	Discrepancies in consumer expectations due to idealistic influencer content	0.12	3	0.36
2	The difficulty of measuring the direct effectiveness between content and service conversions	0.10	3.2	0.32
3	Risk of inauthentic paid content causing burnout	0.08	3	0.24
4	Message inconsistency between influencer content and official Grab communications	0.10	2.8	0.28
5	Over-reliance on fluctuating influencer imagery	0.10	2.9	0.29
Weaknesses Subtotal		0.50		1.49
Total IFAS Score		1.00		3.38

Source : Data processed by researchers, 2025

IFAS's analysis in table 4 shows that Grab's internal strength in its business communication strategy through influencers is quite significant, with a total strength score of 1.89 reflecting the success of Grab's strategy in using a personalized, authentic, and segmented approach, particularly through locally and demographically relevant micro-influencers. The campaign narrative that is built not only conveys product features, but also a real experience that encourages consumer loyalty and positive perception of the brand. This success is also supported by the diversification of Grab's services that can be promoted simultaneously by various types of influencers.

Meanwhile, Grab's internal weakness is also quite noticeable with a score of 1.49. Some of the main obstacles include the mismatch of consumer expectations formed by the influencer's idealistic content, the risk of saturation due to too frequent promotional content, and the inconsistency of messages between the influencer campaign and the company's official communications. In addition, Grab also faces challenges in measuring the direct effectiveness of influencer campaigns on user conversions. Dependence on influencer reputation is also a vulnerable point that needs to be anticipated, considering that fluctuations in public image can have a direct impact on consumer perception of Grab.

Analisis EFAS (*External Factor Analysis Summary*)

The weight of the EFAS analysis was determined based on the results of interviews, literature, and the frequency of external issues mentioned by the informant and secondary data. Factors that often appear such as the dominance of Gen Z and social media technology are given higher weight (0.12–0.10), as they have a significant impact on influencer marketing strategies. The rating is given based on the evaluation of how much of the opportunity has been or can be used optimally by Grab, as well as how much of an impact the threat has on the stability of consumer confidence. The rating uses a scale of 1–4, where 4 means that it has a huge potential to encourage (opportunities) or disrupt (threats) Grab's communication strategy. The score is obtained from the results of weight times and ratings, and reflects the relative strength of each external factor.

Table 5. EFAS Analysis Results

No	Opportunity Factor	Weight	Rating	Skor
1	Growth of active and responsive Gen Z users on social media	0.12	4	0.48
2	The development of digital technology and social media algorithms that support the distribution of content	0.10	3.8	0.38
3	Consumer preferences for testimonial content and personal reviews	0.10	3.6	0.36
4	The public's need for safe, fast, and convenient online transportation services	0.08	3.7	0.30
Opportunity Subtotal		0.40		1.52
No	Faktor Ancaman	Weight	Rating	Skor
1	Competitors' strategies (Gojek, Maxim, InDriver) that are increasingly aggressive in using influencers	0.12	3.5	0.42
2	Social media algorithm changes that lower organic reach	0.10	3.2	0.32
3	Viral negative content from influencers that has an impact on brand reputation	0.10	3	0.30
4	Public skepticism of paid content that is not transparent or perceived as inauthentic	0.08	3	0.24
Threat Subtotals		0.40		1.28
Total EFAS Score		0.80		2.80

Source : Data processed by researchers, 2025

The results of EFAS's analysis in table 5 show that external opportunity factors have a major influence on the success of Grab's business communication strategy through influencers, especially due to the high activity of Gen Z users on social media as well as their preference for personal and authentic review content. This gives Grab a lot of room to adapt its communication approach to evolving digital and technological trends. However, on the other hand, Grab is also faced with a fairly serious threat from competitors who are aggressive in using similar strategies, as well as reputational risks due to negative content and market saturation of non-transparent paid promotions. Therefore, Grab needs to adopt a communication strategy that is adaptive, responsive to public issues, and focuses on transparency and authenticity of messages to maintain its competitive position.

Discussion

The results of this study show that Grab's business communication strategy through the use of influencers has proven to be effective in building consumer trust, especially among Gen Z who are more responsive to digital content and personal testimonials. These findings are in line with the theory of *Source Credibility* put forward by Maulidia and Ratnasari (2021), which emphasizes the importance of *trustworthiness*, *expertise*, and *attractiveness* in building an influencer's influence. This research also reinforces the findings Afriani and Hidayati (2024) which noted that 67% of respondents trust influencer reviews more than official company advertisements. Content that is personal, authentic, and in accordance with the target audience's lifestyle is able to create an emotional connection that increases loyalty and positive perception of the Grab brand.

However, the effectiveness of this strategy cannot be separated from a number of challenges. Some weaknesses were identified such as the mismatch of consumer expectations due to influencer content that is too idealistic, as well as the difficulty of measuring conversions from engagement to real purchases. This is in line with the

findings Aji (2021) which show that although engagement indicators can be measured quantitatively, their impact on purchasing decisions is still difficult to map with certainty. In addition, the risk of audience saturation of promotional content and the incompatibility of the influencer's image with brand value are obstacles that are also identified by Fitriyani and Widarmanti (2023), where around 35% of influencer campaigns fail to reach the target due to a lack of authenticity.

In the face of threats from competitors and changes in social media algorithms, Grab's communication strategy must be adaptive and based on transparency. Studies from Izzati et al. (2023) and Purwanti and Adialita (2024) show that micro-influencers who have a small but loyal audience are actually able to generate higher conversions compared to macro-influencers, confirming the importance of quality engagement rather than just a wide reach. Taking these findings into account, Grab needs to strengthen the selection of influencers based on value suitability, conduct regular content audits, and prioritize education-oriented collaboration and two-way interaction to maintain consumer trust amid the increasingly competitive dynamics of the online transportation market.

5. Conclusion

This study concludes that the role of influencers in Grab's business communication strategy plays a significant role in building and increasing consumer trust, especially from Gen Z who are very active on social media. The use of personalized, authentic, and relatable content has proven to be more effective than traditional promotional approaches, especially when delivered by micro-influencers with high engagement rates. Nonetheless, the effectiveness of this strategy is also faced with challenges such as mismatch of consumer expectations, saturation of paid content, and reputational risks due to negative content. Thus, the success of Grab's communication strategy through influencers is highly dependent on value suitability, message consistency, and transparency in collaboration between brands and influencers.

Based on the findings of this study, it is recommended that Grab be more selective in choosing influencers who have a value alignment with the brand, as well as ensuring that the content produced is educational, transparent, and reflects real experiences. Grab also needs to expand its collaboration with micro-influencers who have a personal connection to the local community and high engagement, rather than just focusing on the broad reach of macro-influencers.

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