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The Influence of Micro-Influencers on Consumer Interest in Visiting Fine Dining Restaurants

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the influence of micro-influencers on consumer visit intentions to fine dining restaurants. Micro-influencers, with followers ranging from 500 to 5.000, are considered more authentic and trusted compared to larger influencers. The research uses a quantitative method with purposive sampling on 271 respondents who have viewed micro-influencer content related to fine dining restaurants. Data was collected through a 5-point Likert questionnaire and analyzed using SPSS and PLS-SEM. The results are expected to explain the impact of hedonic and utilitarian values of micro-influencers on consumer visit interest. These findings provide practical contributions for restaurant operators in formulating effective digital promotion strategies. The implications of this research are divided into three parts: theoretically, it strengthens digital marketing studies by showing that the hedonic aspect is more dominant than functional benefits in fine dining; practically, restaurants need to choose micro-influencers with high engagement that align with their brand image to emphasize emotional experiences; and from a policy perspective, this research could serve as input for regulators in formulating endorsement ethics by micro-influencers.

Keywords: micro-influencer, hedonic value, utilitarian value, visit interest, fine dining

A. Introduction

The development of social media has given rise to a new social phenomenon in consumer behavior. Consumers now tend to rely on recommendations obtained from content on social media before deciding to purchase a product or visit a place. In the culinary industry, especially fine dining restaurants, this phenomenon is evident from the increasing influence of influencers in shaping consumer perceptions and interests.

Several previous studies support this phenomenon. Hwang et al. (2021) and Wisnuadi (2023) found that digital marketing through social media provides consumers with broader access to information when choosing restaurants. Dinç (2023) emphasizes that influencers play an important role in promoting products and services by leveraging both visual and narrative content on digital platforms.

In addition, the research by Misra et al. (2024) concludes that micro-influencers are more effective than macro-influencers because they are perceived as more authentic, trustworthy, and capable of building close relationships with the audience. Meanwhile, the study by Vo-Thanh et al. (2022) shows that fine dining restaurants are chosen by consumers not only for the quality of the food but also for the emotional and exclusive experience they offer. Furthermore, Faruq et al. (2023) and Yusa (2023) emphasize that utilitarian value and hedonic value are the main dimensions that influence consumer behavior in decision-making. Micro-influencers have great potential in conveying both dimensions to consumers through authentic, engaging, and relevant content. Although previous research has extensively discussed the role of influencers in digital marketing (Yunus, 2020), there are still a number of theoretical issues that need further investigation, particularly in the context of micro-influencers in the fine dining restaurant industry (Almaida & Saputra, 2021).

Previous studies have explored various aspects of social media and influencer marketing, yet gaps remain. Chen et al. (2022) highlight social media as the primary platform for restaurant selection but do not address the specific role of micro-influencers with fewer followers but higher trust. Dinç (2023) and Benevento et al. (2025) find that influencers shape brand perception but leave unclear the differential impact of micro-influencer factors like credibility, expertise, and attractiveness on consumer behavior. Qazi et al. (2022) confirm micro-influencers' authenticity compared to macro-influencers, but their study does not focus on the fine dining industry, which emphasizes emotional value and exclusivity. Vo-Thanh et al. (2022) and Redda (2020) demonstrate that emotional experience drives visits to fine dining restaurants, raising the question of whether micro-influencers are better at emphasizing hedonic over utilitarian value. Lastly, Felix et al. (2017) discuss how hedonic and utilitarian values influence consumer behavior, but these factors have not been specifically tested in influencer marketing for the premium culinary industry.

In addition to theoretical issues, practical challenges also exist in applying marketing strategies with micro-influencers in the fine dining restaurant

industry. Hwang et al. (2021) highlight social media as a key tool for restaurant selection, yet fine dining restaurants struggle to create digital promotions that emphasize exclusivity and emotional experiences rather than just basic details like menu or price. Dinç (2023) points out the role of influencers in sharing promotional content, but restaurant owners face the challenge of choosing influencers that align with their brand image. While many opt for macro-influencers due to their popularity, Misra et al. (2024) show that micro-influencers are more trusted and authentic, revealing a gap between business strategy and promotional effectiveness. Vo-Thanh et al. (2022) find that fine dining consumers value emotional over functional aspects, but many promotional strategies still focus on utilitarian benefits like discounts or menu variety, neglecting the hedonic experience. Consequently, communication strategies often fail to address consumers' main motivations.

Although there has been extensive research on digital marketing and the role of influencers, several gaps remain. Hwang et al. (2021) did not focus on the premium segment like fine dining restaurants, while Dinç (2023) and Benevento et al. (2025) did not differentiate between the influence of mega-, macro-, and micro-influencers. Jin et al. (2019) did not examine the factors of credibility, expertise, attractiveness, and engagement of micro-influencers in depth. Mohd-Ramly et al. (2020) discussed utilitarian and hedonic values but did not link these to micro-influencer content in fine dining restaurants. Vo-Thanh et al. (2022) highlighted emotional experiences as the main driver of visits but did not connect this with marketing strategies through micro-influencers. This study addresses these gaps by analyzing the effectiveness of micro-influencers in communicating hedonic versus utilitarian values in the context of fine dining restaurants.

The main novelty of this research is to link the role of micro-influencers with utilitarian and hedonic value in shaping consumer interest in visiting fine dining restaurants, taking into account psychological factors such as credibility, expertise, attractiveness, and engagement.

B. METHOD

This study uses a quantitative approach with an explanatory research type (Arikunto, 2010), aiming to explain the causal relationship between independent variables (the influence of micro-influencers with utilitarian and hedonic dimensions) and the dependent variable (consumer interest in visiting fine dining restaurants). The population of this study consists of consumers who have seen micro-influencer content on social media about their experiences at fine dining restaurants. The sample includes 271 respondents selected using a non-probability sampling method with a purposive sampling technique, based on specific criteria: having seen micro-influencer content about fine dining restaurants, actively using at least one social media platform (Instagram, TikTok, or YouTube), and belonging to the upper-middle class.

Data collection is done through an online questionnaire distributed via Google Forms or other survey platforms, using a 5-point Likert scale (1 =

strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree). The questionnaire instrument is designed based on the research variables and relevant indicators, which include the credibility, engagement, utilitarian value, and hedonic value of micro-influencers as independent variables, and consumer interest in visiting fine dining restaurants as the dependent variable.

The independent variables in this study include credibility (trustworthiness, expertise, attractiveness), engagement (interaction with followers, response rate, audience involvement), utilitarian value (useful information, content clarity, practicality of recommendations), and hedonic value (emotional experience, pleasure, visual appeal of content). The dependent variable includes consumer interest in seeking more information, trying the promoted restaurant, recommending it to others, and actually visiting the restaurant.

The research procedure begins with the preparation stage, which involves designing the questionnaire and conducting content validity testing with experts. In the instrument testing stage, a pilot test is conducted on 30 respondents to examine the validity and reliability of the questionnaire items. In the data collection stage, the questionnaire is distributed to respondents according to the sample criteria. Data processing is performed by inputting the data into statistical software such as SPSS and PLS-SEM. The data analysis stage involves both descriptive and inferential analysis to test the hypotheses and draw conclusions from the research findings.

Data analysis methods include descriptive analysis to calculate the mean, standard deviation, and distribution of respondents for each variable. Item validity is tested using Corrected Item-Total Correlation, while reliability is tested using Cronbach Alpha values (>0.7). Hypotheses are tested using multiple linear regression to examine the influence of independent variables on the dependent variable, t-tests for partial effects, and F-tests for simultaneous effects. The coefficient of determination (R^2) is used to determine the extent to which the independent variables contribute to the dependent variable (Creswell, 2014).

C. RESULTS

Table 1. Respondent Characteristics

Characteristic	Category	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	107	39.50%
	Female	164	60.50%
Generation	Generasi Baby Boomer (1946-1964)	1	0.04%
	Generasi X (1954-1980)	45	16.60%
	Generasi Y (1981-1995)	89	32.80%
	Generasi Z (1996-2010)	136	50.20%

Characteristic	Category	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Domisile	Bekasi	20	7.4
	Bogor	42	15.5
	Depok	60	22.1
	Jakarta Barat	25	9.2
	Jakarta Pusat	24	8.9
	Jakarta Selatan	42	15.5
	Jakarta Timur	15	5.5
	Jakarta Utara	12	4.4
	Tangerang	28	10.3
Employment Status	Freelancer	19	7.0
	Lecturer	27	10.0
	Housewives	11	4.1
	Employee	66	24.4
	Professional (Lawyer, Doctor)	24	8.9
	Students	80	29.5
	Entrepreneur	44	16.2

Source: Processed by the researcher (2025)

Table 1 shows the respondent characteristics in the study on the influence of micro-influencers on consumer interest in visiting fine dining restaurants. Out of 271 respondents, 39.5% were male, and 60.5% were female. In terms of generation, the majority of respondents were from Generation Z (50.2%), indicating the dominance of the younger generation (Generation Z), which is more active on social media and more easily influenced by digital content and micro-influencers. Regarding domicile, most respondents were from Depok (22.1%), followed by Jakarta Selatan and Bogor (each with 15.5%). In terms of employment status, the highest percentage of respondents were students (29.5%), followed by employees (24.4%), entrepreneurs (16.2%), and professionals (8.9%).

Table 2. Validity Test

Variable	Item Statement	r-table	r-count
Hedonic Value	That content makes me happy	0.195	0.855
	The content gives a luxurious impression	0.195	0.799
	The content presents appetizing food.	0.195	0.864

Variable	Item Statement	r-table	r-count
	I feel relaxed when watching that content.	0.195	0.782
Benefit Value	Fine dining restaurants serve high-quality ingredients.	0.195	0.810
	Fine dining restaurants use the best cooking techniques to produce exceptional products.	0.195	0.857
	Testimonials provide benefits for me to visit fine dining restaurants.	0.195	0.824
	Fine dining restaurants pay attention to food cleanliness and safety for their guests.	0.195	0.837
	Fine dining restaurants provide excellent service for visitors.	0.195	0.788
Visit Interest	I am more eager to seek information about the fine dining restaurant.	0.195	0.878
	I wish to visit a fine dining restaurant because of the quality of food that is served.	0.195	0.824
	I want to visit a fine dining restaurant because of the promotions available.	0.195	0.842
	I desire to visit a fine dining restaurant because of the positive reviews.	0.195	0.831
	Overall, micro-influencer content influences me to visit fine dining restaurants.	0.195	0.787

Source: Processed by the researcher (2025)

Table 2 presents the validity test results for four questions under the variable Hedonic Value and five questions under Benefit Value and Visit Interest. All items show an r-count greater than the r-table value (0.195), indicating that each item is valid and effectively measures the intended variable. High r-count values reflect that the statements consistently measure relevant aspects of hedonic value, benefit value, and visit interest variables, suggesting that the instrument used in this study is reliable and well-constructed.

Table 3. Reliability Test

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Alpha Value
Hedonic Value	0.838	0.673
Benefit Value	0.885	0.685
Visit Interest	0.889	0.694

Source: Processed by the researcher (2025)

The reliability test table shows the Cronbach's Alpha values for each of the main variables in the study, namely Hedonic Value, Benefit Value, and visit interest. The Cronbach's Alpha values for these three variables are all greater than 0.8, indicating that the instruments used to measure these variables are reliable and consistent. Specifically, the Cronbach's Alpha value for Hedonic Value is 0.838, for Benefit Value is 0.885, and for Visit Interest is 0.889. These values indicate that all measurement instruments for the three variables have good reliability, meaning that the data collected through the questionnaires tend to produce consistent and stable results when repeated at different times or with different respondents.

Table 4. Coefficient of Determination

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square
1	0.795	0.634	0.631

Source: Processed by the researcher (2025)

The R value of 0.795 indicates a very strong relationship between the independent variables (hedonic value and benefit value from micro-influencers) and the dependent variable (consumer interest in visiting fine dining restaurants). The R Square value of 0.634 means that 63.4% of the variation in consumer visit interest can be explained by this model, which is influenced by the hedonic and benefit values communicated through micro-influencers. The remaining 36.6% is explained by other factors outside the model, such as price, location, culinary trends, offline promotions, restaurant reputation, or individual preferences. The Adjusted R Square value of 0.631 is close to the R Square value, indicating that the regression model used is relevant, stable, and reliable even with adjustments for the number of variables in the model.

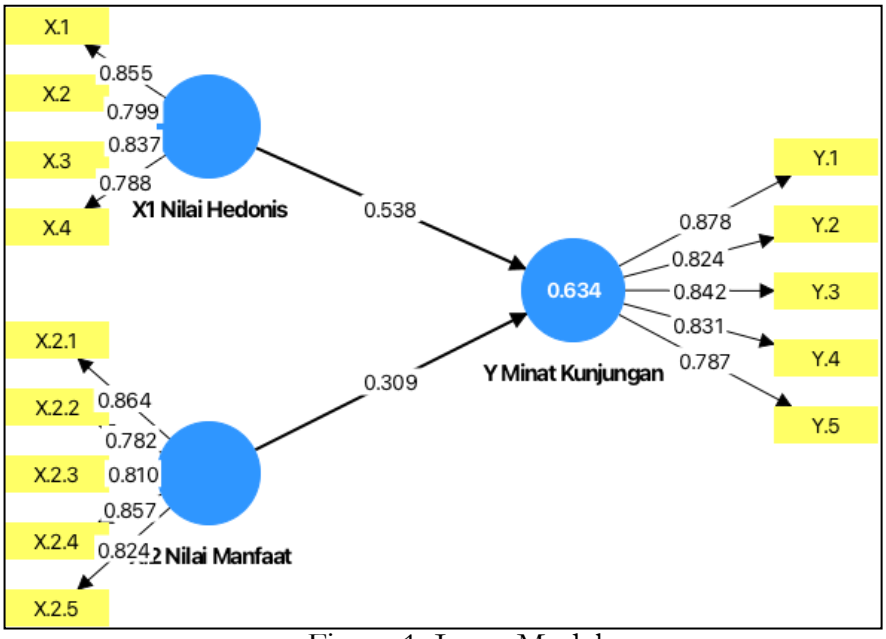


Figure 1. Inner Model
Source: Processed by the researcher (2025)

Hypothesis 1 (H1): the utilitarian value of micro-influencers has a positive effect on consumer visit intentions to fine dining restaurants. Path coefficient = 0.309. This means that the utilitarian value (useful information, content clarity, practicality) conveyed by micro-influencers has a positive influence on consumer visit interest. However, the magnitude of this influence is relatively smaller compared to hedonic value. Hypothesis 2 (H2): The Hedonic Value of Micro-Influencers has a positive effect on Consumer Interest in Visiting Fine Dining Restaurants. Path coefficient = 0.538. This means that the hedonic value (emotional appeal, enjoyable experience, and visual content) of micro-influencers has a greater influence on consumer interest compared to utilitarian value.

Model Interpretation: The R^2 value = 0.634, indicating that the combination of utilitarian and hedonic values possessed by micro-influencers can explain 63.4% of the variability in consumer interest in visiting fine dining restaurants. The remaining 36.6% is influenced by other factors outside of this research model, such as word of mouth, direct restaurant promotions, or personal consumer experiences. Conclusion of the hypothesis, H1 accepted: Utilitarian values have a positive influence on consumer visit intention. H2 accepted: Hedonic values have a positive influence on consumer visit intention. Hedonic values have proven to be more dominant than utilitarian values in influencing consumer visit intention to fine dining restaurants.

D. Conclusion

The research results indicate that hedonic value has a significant impact on visit interest to fine dining restaurants. This can be explained because consumers who choose fine dining restaurants are not only seeking functional benefits from food but also pursuing emotional experiences, exclusive ambiance, and aesthetic satisfaction offered. The content of micro-influencers showcasing appealing visual elements, personal experiences, and a sense of luxury more easily evokes curiosity and the desire of consumers to try it firsthand. Thus, hedonic value becomes a stronger driver compared to utilitarian value in influencing consumer decisions in the context of premium restaurants.

This finding is in line with several previous studies. Misra et al. (2024) state that micro-influencers who highlight authenticity and emotional experiences are more effective in influencing consumer behavior. Similar results were also revealed by Vo-Thanh et al. (2022), who found that fine dining consumers are more influenced by emotional experience factors than mere functional benefits. The research by Mohd-Ramly et al. (2020) emphasizes that hedonic value plays an important role in shaping consumer purchase decisions, especially in the hospitality sector. Additionally, the study by Daries et al. (2024) shows that social media plays a significant role in creating a positive image through emotional content that can increase visitation interest. Dinç (2023) also found that the visual and emotional appeal of influencer content strengthens audience engagement and encourages purchase intention.

In addition to hedonic factors, this study also shows that benefit value (utilitarian value) significantly influences consumers' intention to visit fine dining restaurants. This can be understood because although consumers seek emotional experiences, they still consider functional aspects such as clarity of information, menu recommendations, prices that match quality, and ease of access presented by micro-influencers. Clear, practical, and relevant information about restaurants helps consumers in a more rational decision-making process. Thus, micro-influencers who can convey concrete benefits of restaurants, such as service quality, menu variety, or exclusive facilities, also strengthen consumers' intention to visit.

This finding is in line with the research of Mohd-Ramly et al. (2020), which shows that utilitarian value influences consumer satisfaction and the intention to revisit in the hospitality sector. Hwang et al. (2021) also affirm that information clarity on social media enhances consumer perception of a restaurant brand. Additionally, Conde & Casais (2023) found that consumers are more likely to visit restaurants when micro-influencers provide practical and relevant recommendations. Benevento et al. (2025) added that the credibility of information shared by influencers strengthens consumers' intention to try products or services. Thus, it can be understood that benefit

value plays a significant role as it provides a rational basis for consumers before they decide to visit fine dining restaurants.

Hedonic value has a significant and more dominant influence compared to utilitarian value in affecting consumer interest in visiting fine dining restaurants. Benefit/utilitarian value also proves to have a significant influence, although its level of influence is smaller compared to hedonic value. The research model explains 63.4% of the variation in consumer visit interest, with the remainder influenced by other factors outside the model.

The implications of the research are (1) fine dining restaurants need to leverage micro-influencers who highlight emotional, aesthetic, and exclusive experience aspects in their promotional content; (2) functional information (pricing, menu, facilities) should still be communicated clearly to support rational consumer decision-making; and (3) digital marketing strategies should balance between hedonic value (emotion, visuals, experiences) and utilitarian value (benefits, clarity of information).

The research sample is limited to 271 respondents, so the results cannot be generalized widely. The measurement of variables is conducted using self-report questionnaires, which may introduce respondent perception bias. The study only focuses on micro-influencers, without comparing them to macro- or mega-influencers. The research object is limited to the context of fine dining restaurants, so the results may differ in other types of restaurants.

Suggestions for future research are (1) involving a larger and more demographically diverse number of respondents; (2) comparing the effectiveness of micro-influencers with macro-influencers or celebrity influencers; (3) adding other variables such as brand image, trust, or electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) that may also affect visit interest; (4) using mixed methods with in-depth interviews for more comprehensive results; and (5) conducting cross-cultural research to see if the influence of hedonic and utilitarian value is consistent in other countries.

E. Conflict of Interest

The authors have no financial interests, commercial relationships, or personal connections with micro-influencers or fine dining businesses that constitute a conflict of interest in this research.

F. Declaration of AI Use

The authors employed ChatGPT by OpenAI solely for grammatical refinement of the manuscript. Each suggested correction was reviewed alongside the original text to preserve the intended meaning, research terminology, and scholarly arguments. The authors approved the final wording and retain full responsibility for the accuracy, originality, and integrity of the article.

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