

## Research Article

# Because Follower Experience Matters: The Continuance Intention to Follow Recommendation of the Influencer

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In harnessing social media, for the follower to keep following recommendations from the influencer, the concerns are primarily focused on the influencer side only. However, the follower's experience, in fact, is equally crucial as, at the end of the day, that is the follower who decides to continue following or not the recommendation from the influencer over all the influences. Therefore, this paper examines the follower experience determining the follower to keep following the influencer's recommendation. In particular, the psychological aspects imbued by the experience that promotes well-being and inspiration affect the follower's intention to continue to follow. A total of 292 screened respondents were gathered and analysed. The findings reveal that the psychological factors: emotional design, functionalities, and hedonism perceived by the follower enhance well-being and inspire them to continue following the influencer's recommendation. Theoretically, this research demonstrates how well-being and inspiration are the determinants and sheds more light on how the follower experience contributes to understanding the continuance intention to follow the influencer's recommendation. Practically, this research informs the influencer and the brand that understanding the follower experiences is also crucial for more effective influence. The limitation and future research directions are also discussed.

## 1. Introduction

Today, social media is used as a platform for users to connect, communicate, and interact with each other through the internet. One of the most prominent ones with many users (more than 1 billion users and 500 million daily active users) is Instagram [1]. It is used as the most effective media marketing with a vast percentage (90%) among 5000 marketing agencies, brands, and other industry professionals [2]. In fact, in 2020 alone, 80% of them believe that Instagram is the most popular influencer marketing. In addition, Instagram, in particular, is the most popular social media channel for this type of marketing strategy as its highest engagement rate is 68% compared to other platforms [2]. Instagram's users who follow other users

are called followers. The user being followed is called a social media influencer (SMI) or opinion leader (hereafter referred to as an influencer), a user who can influence the followers. The follower-influencer interaction allows the followers to see all Instagram's activities regularly with the influencer and interact.

Consequently, the influencer can post and share content to influence the followers' opinions and behaviours [3]. The followers who follow an influencer are because they associate themselves with the influencer [4]; for instance, a follower follows a certain product or criteria the influencer endorse through the Instagram post to catch the followers' interest. Moreover, for the followers to be influenced by the post, the influencer's personal brand is crucial [5]. It determines the trust and credibility of the influencer [6]. Once the

followers perceive these factors, they are satisfied, which leads them to follow the advice from the influencer [7], for instance, in purchase intention and healthy lifestyle [8, 9].

Notwithstanding these, while initial following the advice is a fundamental step towards realizing the influencer's success, the long-term viability of this and its eventual success depend on the continued follow rather than the first-time follow [10]. A considerable amount of literature has examined the follower-influencer experience that motivates the follower to keep following the advice from the influencer [11–13]. However, most of them are focused only on parasocial interaction, which is a one-way interaction and influence from the influencer, for instance, an influencer with many followers determines the effectiveness of the brand marketing, uniqueness of the product endorsed by the influencer, personal brand of the influencer per se, etc., [9, 14, 15]. Very little is known about the experience from the follower's side that drives them to continue following the advice from the influencer. Understanding this is crucial as, at the end of the day, that is the follower who decides to keep following advice from the influencer.

The psychological aspects of the decision need to be well understood [16, 17], particularly the ones that mediate the intention of followers to keep following the advice from the influencer. Chuah [16], for instance, posited that psychological aspects of inspiration and well-being could significantly mediate the continuance intention to use of smartwatch. In similar veins, well-being is also demonstrated to significantly affect the continuance intention to an online dating application [18] and social network Facebook [19]. Both inspiration and well-being, in fact, are highly correlated [20], that inspiration affects and enhances significantly well-being [16]. In other words, inspiration and well-being can be the mechanisms to mediate the intention to continue following the recommendation from the influencer, as shown by Chuah [16], in the context of wearable technology in the Malaysian context.

However, the followers' well-being status that inspires them to keep following recommendations remains unclear. Therefore, it needs to be well understood. For the followers, inspiration is driven by, for instance, the post that is emotionally designed by the influencer [21]. Rietveld et al. [22] revealed that emotionally designed posts and informative appeals encoded in brand-generated content significantly influence followers. For instance, as shown here [22, 23], the ecstatic and emotional appeals manifested in the social media context can impact the follower's intention to continue following the influencer. This is because emotion is contagious through social media posts [24]. Humans process visual information faster than verbal information, and pictures are more emotionally evocative than words [22, 25]. Thus, the positive emotion through the design perceived by followers inspires their well-being. Furthermore, the experience of enjoyment and functionality perceived by the followers through the posted content also determines their positive emotions [11].

This research aims to understand how the follower-influencer experiences affect the intention to continue following the recommendation of the influencer. This experi-

ence as the antecedent will be mediated by the inspiration and well-being for the continuance intention. Inspiration and well-being, as earlier described, are the factors accrued because of the feelings that are evoked from the contents posted by the influencer. The content that is emotionally designed, useful and rises joy and happiness perceived by the followers will be the factors underlying the inspiration and well-being.

The article is structured as follows: the second section describes works underpinning this research. Section 3 draws the conceptual model and the hypotheses developments. Section 4 discusses the methodology subsequently, the data analysis is described in the next section. Sections 6 discusses the theoretical and practical contributions of the research and the limitations and future research directions, respectively.

## 2. Theoretical Background

*2.1. Follower-Influencer Experience.* The interaction between follower and influencer creates a follower-influencer experience [26]. This relation becomes a factor that underlies the behavioural change of the followers [2]. While the initial follow is essential in this experience of the follower-influencer relationship, the paper aims to address whether a follower will continue following the influencer's advice. For the brand and influencer, maintaining their followers to be loyal is crucial for economic purposes and business sustainability. For the followers per se, it improves their well-being and inspires them to have a better life [16]. Among the factors that determine this is represented by psychological aspects of the follower: the content that is emotionally designed, the functionality, and joy and happiness perceived by the follower.

A growing body of literature recognises the importance of emotional design that influence a follower's experience [27]. In product design, emotional design is a relatively new school of thought that contends that the design output may elicit emotional reactions from consumers, such as feelings of happiness or frustration, as well as feelings of irritation, excitement, or frustration [28]. It has been widely adopted by many researchers in various fields, for instance, in e-commerce [29], multimedia learning [30], game [27], tourism [28]. Emotional design in this context is highly related to the way information is presented, and interactions are structured using a number of design features by the designer [31]. Their intention to create a product that incorporates the emotional aspect is with the aim to not only foster its acceptance but also to increase its continuance usage. The aspects of emotional design such as colour, human-like features/shape [27, 32] or cultural adaptivity [23], are employed in the design process to evoke users' emotions, such as happy, upset, enthusiastic, frustration, are used to increase engagement rate of the social media sites effectively [30, 33].

In our context, these experiences are expressed by hedonic and functional experiences, respectively. These experiences are perceived by followers based on the posts of the influencer. While hedonic experience represents the feeling of pleasure and joy perceived by the follower during

the follower-influencer relation [34], the functional experience focuses on whether the product posted by the influencer might benefit the follower rationally [17]. In other words, both experiences are related. On the one hand, whether the posts sufficiently generate a feeling of happiness in the followers, and on the other hand, they also offer usefulness perceived by the followers. Both these values significantly determine followers' satisfaction with social media. In the follower-influence experience, the hedonic and functional experiences are stimulated by the interaction between the followers and their social media use.

**2.2. Inspiration.** Inspiration is the art of inspiring people [35]. It is defined as “a customer’s temporary motivational state that facilitates the transition from the reception of a marketing-induced idea to the intrinsic pursuit of consumption-related goals” ([36], p. 116). It is acknowledged that someone is inspired when insights or ideas imbue a task with a sense of necessity and excitement. An individual does not feel to be inspired all of a sudden. Instead it is evoked from the external sources, the stimulus objects [37], for instance, from a piece of art, a role model, a creative idea or design which motivates individuals in order to focus on something more substantial than the trivial matters that usually consume our thoughts. According to Thrash & Elliot [35], inspiration implies motivation and is characterized by three main qualities: evocation, transcendence, and approach motivation. Evocation refers to the fact that inspiration is elicited impulsively without intention. Transcendence is expressed by the feeling of positivity, clarity, and self-enhancement. Approach motivation involves the energisation and activation of behavioural systems in propelling individuals to actualize new ideas or visions [36].

Put differently, a follower is inspired by the content posted on Instagram by the influencer, which evokes the motivation of the follower to keep following them. Instagram, as a particular social media platform, with all the unique characteristics as earlier explained facilitate this. As the followers intentionally follow the influencer, this means that the followers are expected to get insight from the typical posts of the influencers they follow (or the posts of the influencer imbue the followers). The inspiration energises and directs the behaviour of the follower shared by the influencers intentionally or not [20], which, in our context, leads the follower to continue to follow the advice from the influencer.

**2.3. Well-Being.** Ryan and Deci [38] posit that well-being is the optimal psychological functioning and experience. This concept generally departs from two relatively distinct yet overlapping perspectives and paradigms: hedonism, which is focused on happiness, defines well-being in terms of pleasure attainment and pain avoidance; and eudaimonism, which is focused on meaning and self-realization, defines well-being in terms of the degree to which a person is fully functioning. These understandings clearly inform us that well-being is more than just the absence of illness and disease [16]. It is also not only about pleasure versus displeasure [38]. Instead, it is about life satisfaction, emotional

experience, positive and negative effect, and fulfilling one’s life [20, 39].

Extensive research has shown that there appears to be a strong link between well-being and high relatedness to the social network ([39]. As social media have unique features, their users for each social media will have different views and impacts on subjective well-being [39]. In other words, those who have greater intimacy and higher-quality relationships also have higher well-being. That the interactions towards the social media posts between strangers and friends have a different impact. This implies that the interactions between both categories are also different from one another [40]. Therefore, understanding factors that affect well-being might improve our understanding of the intention to keep following the recommendation as it is associated with desirable psychological and social outcomes, such as increasing self-esteem, decreasing loneliness and depression, and maintaining closer connections with friends [16].

**2.4. Continuance Intention to Follow Recommendation.** Continuance usage intention refers to the post-adoption or a continuance usage of an individual in a certain period of a technology product or service. Bhattacharjee [10] posits that turning an adoption into continued use requires three factors: initial decision, initial user experience, and post-use experience. Bhattacharjee [10] then developed an Expectation Confirmation Model (ECM), describing that an intention to continue using a particular service or product of IT is highly related to the satisfaction and the perceived usefulness of the technology/service per se by its users. Once a user is satisfied with the adopted IT product/service and perceives that it is relevant and addresses the user’s needs, the user is most likely to keep using the product or service. The satisfaction itself is determined by the perceived usefulness, and the confirmation of expectations users have experienced during their prior IT usage. This model has successfully explained the continuance usage intention of various technology products/services [41–43]. As such, in this research, ECM is employed as a foundation to examine the user’s intention to continue using social media, particularly Instagram.

### 3. Conceptual Model and Hypothesis Development

Our proposed research model is drawn in Figure 1. As in the figure, the follower-influencer experiences mediated by inspiration and well-being affect the continuance intention to follow recommendation of the influencer. The hypotheses developments are elaborated in the following sections.

**3.1. The Relationships between Emotional Design, and Inspiration and Well-Being.** Although the central value of technological development is to enhance well-being and therefore motivate or inspire individuals, very few studies in the design literature focus on this [44]. In the context of follower-influencer relationship, emotion, as a matter of fact, is a prominent factor in it that needs to be well represented and understood [45]. Emotion should be able to be materialised in the design of the Information System (IS) artefact

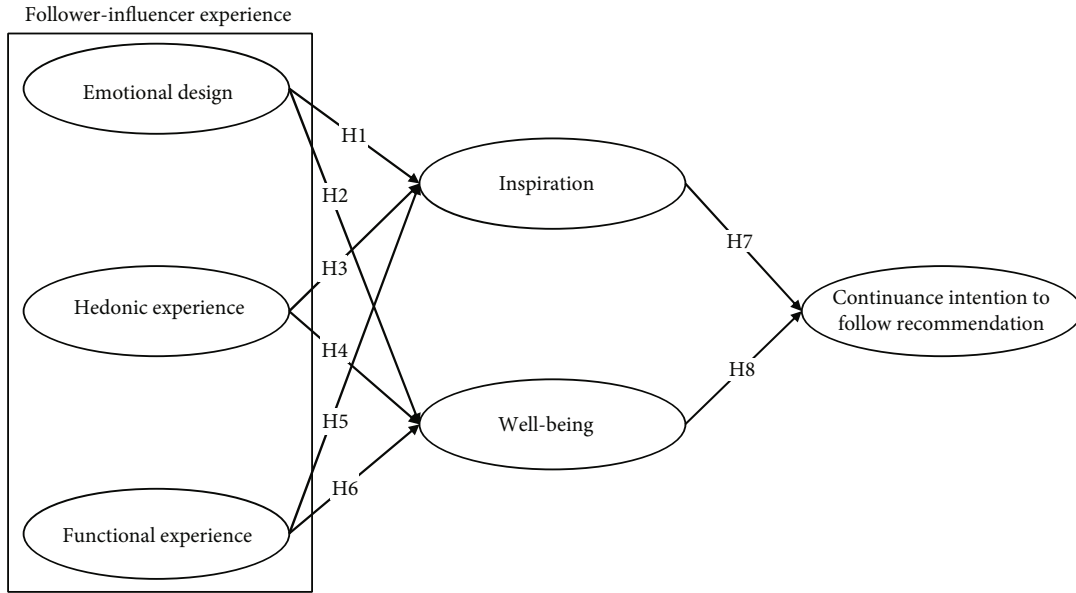


FIGURE 1: Proposed research model.

that allows it to be understood by the users. In this research, that is the content that is generated and designed emotionally by the influencer, and it can be successfully understood by the follower. In Mobile Augmented Reality (MAR) application, for instance, emotion is a determinant factor in the designing process that needs to be well comprehended and expressed in a way that it can be fully understood by its users [28]. This is simply because emotion manifested in User Interface (UI) is heavily related to the perspective of User Experience (UX). Those who are users of the MAR application should understand the emotion represented by it to respond accordingly and increase the engagement rate between them.

Ruitenbergh and Desmet [46] argue that a product or service that is emotionally designed enables people to engage in meaningful activities that contribute to life satisfaction. That people digest visual information faster than textual information, pictures or videos are more emotionally evocative than words [22]. This is because the design itself can contribute to promoting well-being by way of either taking away the source of unhappiness or introducing the source of happiness. Thus, the messages materialised in created creative content that is emotionally designed can both trigger the inspiration for the user to follow the content and promote the happiness experience to those who follow. These can facilitate the users to keep following the content that is produced by the influencer. Withstanding these, we hypothesise that:

H1: Emotional design significantly affects the inspiration of the follower.

H2: Emotional design significantly affects the well-being of the follower.

**3.2. The Relationships between Hedonic Experience and Well-Being and Inspiration.** Essentially, there are tightly relationships between hedonic, well-being, and inspiration [47]. In

fact, they are inseparable concepts as they are overlapping perspectives and paradigms [38]. Well-being itself is derived from hedonic values [48]. Interaction between followers and their influencer provides joy and happiness as it fulfills their needs and enhances their well-being [44]. Moreover, the hedonic experience is also related to inspiration. As earlier explained, inspiration results from a reaction to a stimulus encountered in the external environment or that arise from an intrapsychic source (e.g., memory, unconscious processes) [48]. The consequence is that an inspired individual feels driven to materialises the inspiration into fruition.

Put simply, inspiration reflects a combination of two-component processes [35], *inspired by*, that involves the appreciation of and accommodation to the perceived intrinsic value of the evocative object (e.g., beauty of a landscape, elegance of creative insight, or virtue in a human action), and *inspired to*, which involves motivation to transmit (e.g., express, actualize, or imitate) the qualities exemplified in the evocative object, which is characterised by the approach motivation [20]. It is not an overly assumption that followers that are inspired by content posted by the influencer they follow are inspired to actualise that particular inspiration. In here [49], for instance, the authors show that embracing social media brings joy and happiness to the users that inspire them to increase their purchase intention. In a similar vein, in [50], the authors reveal that the perceived enjoyment in using social media tagging tools, the users are inspired to keep utilising so as to collect and organise information easier from it to be further used. The hedonic experience motivates and inspires the user to keep using it as they perceive joy and happiness to use it. Withstanding these, we then hypothesise that:

H3: Hedonic experience significantly influences inspiration of the follower.

H4: Hedonic experience significantly influences well-being of the follower.

*3.3. The Relationships between Functional Experience and Well-Being and Inspiration.* Functional experience perceived by the followers results from the interaction between the follower and the influencer. It is about functionalities they perceive inherently featured by social media [51]. According to Kietzmann *et al.* [51], these functionalities can be categorised into a honeycomb framework of seven building blocks: presence, sharing, conversation, identity, reputation, group, and relationship. They might generate satisfaction, leading to well-being and inspiration from the follower-influencer experience. For instance, as the social media per se facilitates conversation or sharing between the influencer and its followers, their messages and post can be heard and positively impact one another. This particular relationship affects their emotion [24] which might influence their well-being and inspiration as their messages are delivered effectively [51]. And as inspired by and inspired to, as earlier described, mean that through the interaction between the influencer and the followers, they are inspired by the interaction. Therefore, they are also inspired to embody the inspiration they perceive [49]. As such, the functionality experience of the influencer-follower relationship influences the well-being and inspiration. Thus, we hypothesise that:

H5: Functional experience affects well-being of the follower.

H6: Functional experience affects inspiration of the follower.

*3.4. The Relationship between Well-Being and Inspiration, and Continuance Intention.* As earlier described, the first time following a particular social media is important; however, its continued use is more crucial to ensure more benefits out of the follower-influencer interaction [10]. In this research, instead of examining the continuance intention of a social media [11, 12, 42, 43], we deepen our understanding to the follower-influencer experience that encourages the follower to keep following the recommendation of the influencer through the content posted on the Instagram. In particular, the psychological constructs behind the continuance follow intention need to be well understood to ensure mutual benefit between the influencer and the follower. As earlier described, well-being and inspiration are the highest value other values can be subsumed, and a motivational state that is inspired by stimulus and therefore is inspired to materialise it, respectively [36, 44]. Both constructs have been shown successfully to be the psychological factors that drive individuals to continue using social media [8, 36], smartwatches [16], etc. Thus, this is not an overly assumption that both psychological factors can also be adopted to determine the continued following of the recommendation of the influencer. They both are the mediator factors of the follower-influencer experience that controls the continuance intention to keep following the influencer's recommendation. Therefore, we hypothesise that:

H7: Inspiration affects follower's intention to continued follow recommendation of the influencer.

H8: Well-being affects follower's intention to continued follow recommendation of the influencer.

## 4. Research Methodology

*4.1. Research Instrument.* The sample for this research was gathered using a questionnaire with a focus on the users of the social media Instagram. We developed the questionnaire using google form with the aim to submit it online to the target respondents efficiently. It is also part of the concern of a prevention measure during the condition of pandemic Covid-19. In addition, to be able to reach more potential respondents geographically, this online questionnaire will be efficient. The developed questionnaire is composed of three parts. The developed questionnaire is composed of three parts. The first part is related to the validation questions, which is a set of questions to ensure that the respondents have relevant and required criteria for this research: whether (1) they are Instagram active users (2) they follow at least an influencer on the Instagram and (3) they at least once follow advice or recommendation from the influencer. This is a control question to be asked first to ensure whether a respondent needs to complete the questionnaire. The second part is related to acquiring social-demographics characteristic of the respondents and the third one is about the measurement indicators. The developed online research instrument has been reviewed and approved by Engineering Faculty Universitas Papua.

The responses from the respondents are measured using a 5-point of Likert scale by which 1 (one) to 5 (five) represent completely disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, and completely agree, respectively, except for well-being factor-related questions. For this variable, we provide a combination of different responses ranging from: completely enjoyed/completely satisfied/completely useful to not at all/completely dissatisfied/completely not useful, representing the scale of 1 and 5, respectively. Prior to submitting the questionnaire to the respondents, it was piloted by all authors, four bachelor students, a professor, and two senior lecturers of the Information System department to increase its readability and improve its ambiguities.

It is important that the measurement items chosen for the scales accurately reflect the notion for which generalisations are to be drawn (content validity). Consequently, we adopted and adapted indicators from Kourouthanassis *et al.* [28] and Huang *et al.* [17] to assess the follower-influencer experiences: emotional design, hedonic and functional experiences. We then adapted the measurement indicators to measure inspiration, well-being and continuance intention to follow recommendation of the influencer from Chuah [16]. The items were adapted such that they would be useful in a social-media setting.

Once the questionnaire was ready, we submitted it through social media channels such as Line, Instagram, Twitter, and WhatsApp. In this research, we employed purposive sampling technique [52]. Initially, we obtained a total of 414 respondents that responded to our questionnaire. We then selected them based on the criteria as earlier prescribed. First, we removed 8 respondents as they are not IG active users. Subsequently, we excluded 65 and 49 respondents as they are not following any influencer and have never followed at least a recommendation of

TABLE 1: Social demographic respondents.

Variable	Category	Frequency	%
Age	<16	17	6%
	16-25	223	76%
	26-35	18	6%
	36-45	21	7%
	>45	13	4%
Gender	Female	216	74%
	Male	76	26%
Occupation	Student	226	77%
	Employee	37	13%
	Entrepreneurs	7	2%
	Others	22	8%
Education	Bachelor	242	83%
	Senior high school	36	12%
	Diploma	8	3%
	Postgraduate	6	2%
Domicile	Jabodetabek	241	83%
	Outside Jabodetabek	51	17%
How long the influencer(s) has been followed?	<6 months	84	29%
	6 months -1 year	118	40%
	>1 year and <=3 years	58	20%
	>3 years	32	11%

the influencer, respectively. Thus, a total of 292 respondents are processed to the analysis stage as they meet all the criteria. The responses from the followers revealed that the influencers they follow vary, and not all of them are entertainers; for instance, dr. Tirta (@dr.tirta, a medical doctor, and Arief Muhammad (@ariefmuhammad, social media activist). Of top ten influencers and the number of the followers in this study are: @rachelvennya (57), @ariefmuhammad (25), @tasyafarasha (22), @awkarin (11), @dwiandaanda (9), @keanuagl (8), @nazlaalifa (8), @ayladimitri (7), @abellyc\_ (6), @dr.tirta, @maudyayunda, and @vinnagracia (5).

**4.2. Demography Respondent.** The majority of the respondents live in five geographic areas of the Jakarta Metropolis area (Jabodetabek). But there are 51 respondents, 17,5%, are from outside Jabodetabek. In terms of age, the majority of respondents is 16-25 years old, accounting for 76% and those who are <16, 26-35, 36-45 and >45 years old comprising 6%, 6%, 7% and 4%, respectively. In the gender category, a little less than three-fourths of the respondents are female. Most of them are associated with a bachelor's degree or at least at the university as a student (92%) by the time they responded questionnaire. As we asked how long they have been following at least an influencer, most of them (71%) responded to have been following an influencer between 6 months – 3 years (60%) and more than three years (11%), respectively; only 29%

responded less than six months. The detail of the socio-demographic respondents is drawn in Table 1.

## 5. Data Analysis and Result

**5.1. Measurement Model Evaluation.** The measurement model evaluation is the first of two stages in the data analysis. It is aimed to ensure that the measurement items composing the proposed model describing the latent constructs are valid and reliable [53]. In this evaluation, the first to observe is Factor Loading (FL). This is as shown in Table 2. An FL is generally accepted if the value is greater than 0.7 [54]. Therefore, all the measurement items with the LFs that are lower than the threshold will be excluded for further analysis, they are ED1, ED2, EF1, and EF2. The model evaluation can proceed once all the FLs meet the specified criteria. In the measurement model evaluation, the first criterion to be measured is the internal consistency reliability of the constructs. Both Cronbach's Alpha (CA) and Composite Reliability (CR) values are used for this measurement. All the CA and CR values representing the internal consistency reliability are higher than 0.7, which are considered to have high reliability. However, the value between 0.5-0.7 is also considered to have moderate reliability [55]. The next criterion to be measured is convergent validity [56]. This validation is assessed by the Average Variance Extracted (AVE). The acceptable threshold for AVE is 0.5 or higher [57].

TABLE 2: Values of Factors Loading, Cronbach Alpha, Composite Reliability and Average Variance Extracted of the constructs and the measurement items.

Variable (adapted from)	Code	Measurement item	FL	CA	CR	AVE
Emotional Design [28]	ED1	I feel pleased after looking at the content of Instagram influencer	0.691	0.583	0.587	0.705
	ED2	I feel bored after looking at the content of Instagram influencer	0.304			
	ED3	I feel guided after looking at the content of Instagram influencer	0.752			
	ED4	I feel influenced after looking at the content of Instagram influencer	0.782			
Hedonic Experience [17]	HE1	When looking at the content of Instagram influencer I feel happy	0.886	0.855	0.858	0.774
	HE2	When looking at the content of Instagram influencer I feel satisfied	0.874			
	HE3	When looking at the content of Instagram influencer I feel pleased	0.880			
Functional Experience [17]	FE1	I look at the content of the Instagram influencer I follow based on its graphical design and aesthetics	0.434	0.699	0.704	0.768
	FE2	I feel that the content of the Instagram influencer I is simple and easy to follow	0.633			
	FE3	I feel that the content of the Instagram influencer I follow gives me good experience as a follower	0.857			
	FE4	Generally, when looking at the content of the Instagram influencer I follow, I feel the message of it can be well understood	0.802			
Inspiration [16]	INS1	Looking at the content of the Instagram influencer I follow, inspires me to achieve my personal goal	0.927	0.852	0.860	0.871
	INS2	Looking at the content of the Instagram influencer I follow motivates me to achieve my personal goal	0.939			
Well-being [16]	WB1	How much have you enjoyed life after following the influencer I follow?	0.766	0.784	0.787	0.608
	WB2	To what extent are you satisfied with yourself after following the influencer I follow?	0.844			
	WB3	To what extent are you satisfied with how you look after following the influencer I follow?	0.731			
	WB4	To what extent do you feel that your life is meaningful after following the influencer I follow?	0.772			
Continuance Intention [16]	CI1	I intend to continue following the recommendation from the influencer I follow	0.846	0.829	0.832	0.745
	CI2	I frequently follow the recommendation from the influencer I follow in my daily life	0.874			
	CI3	I will frequently follow the recommendation from the influencer I follow in the future	0.869			

The next is performing discriminant validity evaluation. This is aimed to show to what extent a construct correlates with other constructs and how distinctly the indicators represent only this single construct [57]. In other words, the discriminant validity is aimed to measure that each of the constructs is unique, and therefore each of them is used to represent a phenomenon that other constructs do not. Table 3 exhibits discriminant validity in the model as the value of each variable is greater than the correlations with other variable.

In addition, we also calculated the descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) and correlation between the study variables. This is as shown in Table 4. It shows, we can expect from the data that the intention to continue following the advice from the influencer will increase once the dependent variables increase. These correlation values are in line with the developed hypotheses in which all the variables will be positively correlated. Regarding the inten-

TABLE 3: Discriminant validity of the construct level.

	CI	ED	FE	HE	INS	WB
CI	0.863					
ED	0.531	0.840				
FE	0.444	0.485	0.876			
DE	0.544	0.410	0.455	0.880		
INS	0.39	0.509	0.421	0.337	0.933	
WB	0.614	0.428	0.425	0.525	0.391	0.780

tion to follow the influencer recommendation, we found no difference on age:  $F(4,287)=1.713$ ,  $p=.147$ , domicile:  $F(1,290)=.448$ ,  $p=.504$  and domicile  $F(3,288)=1.678$ ,  $p=.172$ . The only difference to the intention to keep following the advice of the influencer is based on gender (male and female):  $F(1,290)=7.057$ ,  $p=.008$ , however, the  $\eta^2=2.4\%$ ,

TABLE 4: Pearson correlation between study variables.

Variables	Mean	SD	ED	HE	FE	INS	WB	CI
ED	3.31	.48	1					
HE	3.65	.73	.434**	1				
FE	4.08	.53	.427**	.421**	1			
INS	3.68	.83	.414**	.337**	.405**	1		
WB	3.52	.58	.405**	.513**	.407**	.383**	1	
CI	3.37	.78	.475**	.542**	.408**	.390**	.605**	1

very small. As gender only has two groups, we do not proceed to post-hoc test.

**5.2. Structural Model Evaluation.** The examination of the structural model is the next phase. However, we must first evaluate the structural model's possible collinearity. This is done to check that there is no significant association between the proposed model's components [58]. Using the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF), the collinearity problem is assessed. A related-constructs value with the VIF that is equal to or more than 5 and/or less than 0.2 indicates that there is no collinearity concern. In this study, the VIF values of the associated constructs fall within the permissible range of 1.18 to 1.457. Therefore, the structural model examination may continue. The assessment of the structural model is shown in Table 5. Seven of the Eight established hypotheses are acceptable. H3 is rejected because its significance level is below the threshold, its p-value is more than 5%, and/or its t-statistic value is less than 1.96 [58]. The model of the evaluated hypotheses is finally presented in Figure 2.

The analysis also informs us of the coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ) of the dependent variables. As in Figure 2,  $R^2$  of continuance intention, inspiration, and well-being are in a row of 0.404, 0.306, and 0.347. This means that all these three dependent constructs are considered to have a moderate predictive power for each of the independent constructs directly related to them, respectively. In other words, the continuance intention to follow the recommendation can be explained by 40.4% of inspiration and well-being constructs. In a similar vein, while emotional design, hedonic experience, and functional experience constructs can explain moderately the well-being by 34.7%, emotional design and functional experience can moderately predict by 30.6% the inspiration construct as the hedonic experience has no significant effect statistically on it.

## 6. Research Implications, Limitations and Future Research Directions

**6.1. Theoretical Implications.** This research indeed sheds more light on our understanding theoretically of the psychological aspect affecting the follower to continue following the recommendation of the influencer. In particular, the results confirm that emotion is contagious, as defined here [44] and substantially echoed here [45]. Emotion is embodied in the design that propagates through interaction between the follower and influencer. What is expressed in social

media basically describes the emotion we feel in real life, although the emotion levels of the two worlds might be different [45]. We contribute to social media marketing by demonstrating that psychological aspects significantly mediate the follower's intention to continue following the recommendation of the influencer. Notably, we examined that although well-being and inspiration have the potential to change the strategies that marketing managers use to increase demand, exploration behaviour, and customer loyalty, they both are understudied constructs [36]. As such, this research contributes to this by improving our understanding of these constructs in improving the loyalty of the follower to continue following the advice from the influencer.

However, it is worth noting that out of these three antecedents, the hedonic experience perceived by the follower has no significant influence statistically on the inspiration. While it enhances well-being, feeling joy and happiness from the interaction does not inspire the follower to continue following the recommendation from the influencer. This does not support the idea presented here [36] that inspiration is a consequence (evoked by) that mediates the emotion of joy and happiness, which leads to satisfaction and loyalty in the context of following the advice of the influencer. One possible explanation is that in this study, the marketing domain is based on social media (social media marketing), whereas, in Böttger et al. [36] the domain under study is traditional media marketing.

On the other hand, well-being mediates all antecedents that positively affect the follower's intention to continue following the recommendation from the follower. In other words, these antecedents significantly improve the well-being perceived by the follower, which positively affects their loyalty to continue the influencer's recommendation. This is in line with the result of Chuah [16] in the context of the effect of perceived of hedonic and functionality on inspiration and well-being. In Chuah [16], perceived of benefits and functionalities recognised by the individuals significantly inspire them and improve their well-being, which lead them to continue use the wearable smartwatch. Although the domain under study of Chuah [16] is difference from ours, however our intention to refer to that particular research is with the aim to show that psychological aspects, inspiration and well-being, significantly mediate the hedonic and functionality experiences perceived by individuals. In our context, both hedonic and functionality experiences acknowledged by the follower from the interaction with the social media post of the influencer significantly affect the intention to continue following the recommendation of the influencer.

In a similar vein, the brand-generated content that has informative appeal and is designed emotionally also significantly inspires and improves the well-being of the follower to continue following the influencer's advice. This is for instance as shown here [22] that the social media post that is visualised emotionally can significantly increases the follower engagement. In other words, visually appealing imagery, for instance, in the form of art, engenders positive contagion effects for brands and products [59]. In turn, these



TABLE 5: Structural model evaluation.

	Hypotheses	T-statistics	P-values	Results
H1	Emotional design → inspiration	5.567	0.001*	Accepted
H2	Emotional design → well-being	3.282	0.001*	Accepted
H3	Hedonic experience → inspiration	1.441	0.150	Rejected
H4	Hedonic experience → well-being	6.174	0.001*	Accepted
H5	Functional experience → inspiration	3.034	0.002*	Accepted
H6	Functional experience → well-being	2.496	0.013**	Accepted
H7	Inspiration → continuance intention	3.208	0.001*	Accepted
H8	Well-being → continuance intention	10.711	0.001*	Accepted

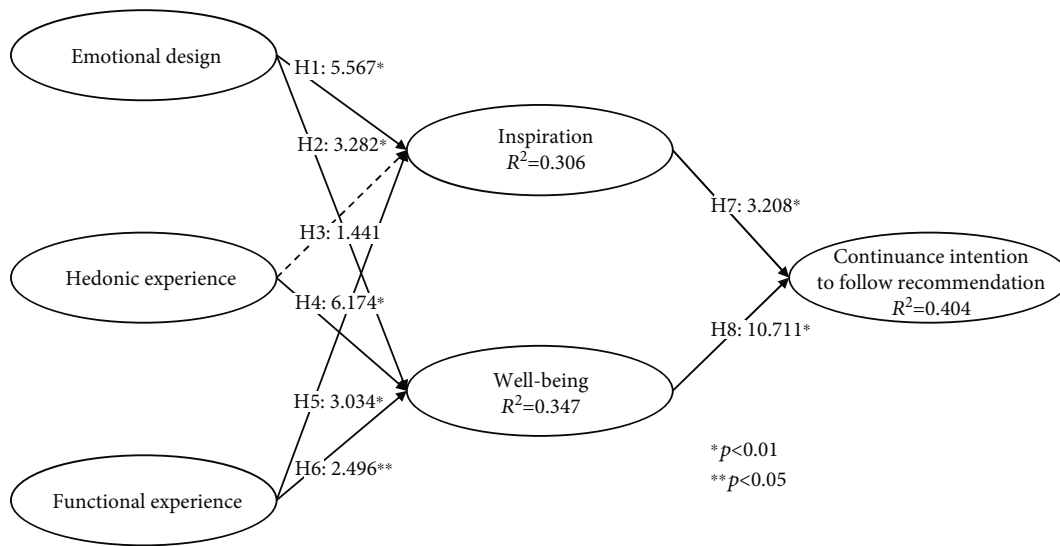


FIGURE 2: Proposed model evaluated.

responses drive customer engagement as consumers examine their feelings during the evaluation of the content [60]. So, exposure to emotionally designed content may transfer strong positive feelings that subsequently guide engagement behaviour. Therefore, these findings suggest that social media's content that is emotionally designed and aimed to provide functionalities and bring joy and happiness to the followers might be better perceived by them, increasing their probability of being followed by the followers.

It is worth noting that the findings inform us once again that not all influencers are those who are already famous from the traditional media. In fact, this study shows that out of the top ten influencers, only one: @maudyayunda, is the only entertainer in this category. In other words, those who have been with traditional media (e.g., television) as famous persons will not automatically be influencers once they embrace social media, in this context, Instagram (IG). The nature of the two worlds is different. Simply put, the feelings of joy and pleasure perceived by the follower from traditional media do not propagate directly to IG. Therefore, these feelings do not inspire the influencer to continue to follow the recommendation from the influencer. The result demonstrates that the hedonic experience perceived by the follower from the rela-

tionship with the influencer has no significant effect statistically on inspiration (H3: hedonic experience → inspiration,  $t$ -statistic = 1.441 < 1.96,  $p = 0.150 > 0.05$ ). This study, once again, echoes the previous ones [3, 61, 62] that social media facilitates ordinary people, e.g., our friends, neighbour, to be opinion leaders.

On the other hand, the study's results demonstrate that the other top nine influencers are those who have no entertainment background from traditional media, such as singers, TV actors/actresses, etc. They are the opinion leaders who share the contents that are conceived as applicable and improve well-being to their targeted audiences. In fact, @dr.tirta, for instance, is a medical professional who shares his voice regarding mitigation/prevention measures during the COVID-19 pandemic through IG.

**6.2. Practical Implications.** This study also provides practical implications to the brand and the influencer to be more effective in influencing the followers. For both the influencer and the brand, the follower experience is equally important as that of the influencer. Thus, it is important to understand the follower experience from the interaction. For the brand, for its product or service that is promoted through an

influencer to be easily recognised and consumed by the follower, it is important to ensure that the influencer, acting as a content creator of the product, accentuates its functionalities. The finding also shows that the content that is emotionally designed positively influences the psychological aspects of the follower as the emotion itself is contagious.

Therefore, for the content creator, including the influencer who promotes the product or service, sustaining the loyalty of the follower can be pursued by ensuring that the content is emotionally created and needs to emphasise the functionalities and happiness. Both functionality experience and emotional design perceived by the follower are shown to have a significant impact on inspiring the follower to keep following the recommendation of the influencer. Together with the feeling of joy and happiness, emotional design and functionality experience significantly affect promoting the well-being of the follower. As well-being and inspiration positively affect the continuance intention to follow the recommendation of the influencer, the content needs to be crafted to influence both factors. This, for instance, can be pursued through adopting and adapting the cultural adaptivity approach that demonstrates practicability and positive feeling to the follower, as elaborated here [22, 23].

In their research, Reinecke & Bernstein [23] demonstrated that adjusting the User Interface (UI) by personalising cultural background significantly improves the User Experience (UX) in an interaction between users and the technology. This is driven by the fact that there is a strong connection between emotion and users' preferences [46]. And user interaction with a positive attitude to the system successfully increases the satisfaction of the user to use it. In a similar vein, in their study, Rietveld et al. [22] revealed that aesthetic, emotional, and factual appeals contained in brand-generated content increase followers' loyalties to it. This results from the interaction between the influencer and follower.

Thus, putting this into the context of our study is that the content that is emotionally designed, for instance, by personalising it into the cultural background of the targeted followers, is expected to inspire and increase their well-being which leads them to continue following it. On the other hand, although the feeling of joy and happiness perceived by the follower through the follower experience does not inspire the follower, together with emotional design and functional experience, they enhance the status of well-being significantly, which leads to an increase in the motive of the follower to keep following the advice of the influencer. Practically, the content that is emotionally designed, for instance, as earlier described, and full of joy and happiness plus promotes functionalities will affect the followers to continue following it.

**6.3. Limitations and Future Research Directions.** This study is without limitation. First, most of the respondents live in Jakarta and its surrounding cities, which does not represent the Instagram users in Indonesia. Thus, to generalise this research for Indonesia as a whole, further validation is sought. Second, the findings imply that to be able to keep following the influencer's recommendation, the follower also

automatically keeps following the influencer (otherwise, the follower cannot be able to see posts of the influencer regularly). However, this does not necessarily mean that the effect of the follower experience to continue following the advice from the influencer is the same for the follower to keep following only the influencer.

In other words, the follower requires following the influencer to be able to keep following its recommendation. However, the effect of the follower experience to continue following the influencer is not the same as following its advice. Most research has investigated factors that determine the followers to keep following an influencer [11, 12, 63]. Nonetheless, the continuance to follows the recommendation of an influencer is driven by the psychological aspect of inspiration, and well-being is still lacking. Third, this research employs only Instagram as a case study. To be able to understand better the follower-influencer experience to continue following the recommendation of the influencer, applying this research to other social media that are used as second and third most influencer marketing media: TikTok and Facebook [2] will be broadening our understanding of social media marketing.

Fourth, this research is about examining factors that affect the follower's intention. If all the relationships are significant then the followers are most likely having the intention to follow the influencer's recommendation. This, however, does not mean they would have already followed it. Individuals' perspectives evolve as they accumulate life experience [64]. Thus, understating this particular psychological functioning of "follow recommendation" definitely will be enthralling for the future research direction. The Unified Theory of Acceptance and use of Technology (UTAUT) of Venkatesh [64, 65] or the Theory of Planned Behaviour of [66] are among other perspectives that can be utilised to portray this issue.

## Data Availability

The data supporting the study's findings are available from the corresponding author upon a reasonable request.

## Conflicts of Interest

On behalf of all authors, the corresponding author states that there is no conflict of interest.

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