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A Story to Sell: The Mediating Role of Storytelling in Consumer Purchase Intention toward Regional Woven Fabrics

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ABSTRACT

Purpose – This study examines the associations of Perceived Government Support and influencer marketing with consumer purchase intention toward traditional woven fabrics from East Nusa Tenggara, Indonesia, considering storytelling as a mediating variable.
Design/methodology/approach – A quantitative survey involving 347 consumers of East Nusa Tenggara woven fabrics was conducted. Data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) to assess direct and indirect relationships.
Finding/Results – Perceived Government Support showed no significant direct association with purchase intention ($\beta = 0.049$; $p = 0.433$) but was positively associated with storytelling ($\beta = 0.574$; $p < 0.001$). Influencer marketing positively related to storytelling ($\beta = 0.222$; $p = 0.019$) and purchase intention ($\beta = 0.166$; $p = 0.002$). Storytelling significantly predicted purchase intention ($\beta = 0.695$; $p < 0.001$) and demonstrated indirect-only mediation for government support ($\beta = 0.399$; $p < 0.001$) and complementary mediation for influencer marketing ($\beta = 0.154$; $p = 0.012$).
Originality/Value – This study integrates government support, influencer marketing, and cultural storytelling into a unified framework explaining purchase intention toward traditional cultural products. It highlights storytelling as a strategic marketing approach for governments and SMEs while providing a foundation for future cross-cultural and longitudinal research.

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Regional Woven Fabrics, Storytelling, Influencer Marketing, Perceived Government Support, Purchase Intention

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1. Introduction

In the context of globalization and international market competition, local cultural products such as woven fabrics face both challenges in maintaining their relevance and opportunities to enter broader markets. Developing effective marketing strategies is therefore essential, particularly in the textile industry, where products often carry strong cultural and traditional significance. Regional woven fabrics possess considerable cultural and economic value in many parts of the world. In Indonesia, East Nusa Tenggara (ENT) woven fabrics have the potential to attract attention beyond local markets because of their distinctive cultural characteristics and economic value. The International Trade Centre (ITC, 2021) emphasizes inclusive and sustainable trade as a pathway for the recovery of small producers. In this regard, ENT woven fabrics represent a rich cultural heritage while also offering economic opportunities for local communities (Cao et al., 2014). As symbols of cultural identity and tradition, these fabrics may also appeal to consumers in broader markets (Gonzalez & Mege, 2018; Pandey et al., 2022).

Despite their cultural and economic potential, ENT woven fabrics continue to face challenges in reaching and competing in international markets, particularly in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic. Realizing this potential is important because these products not only preserve cultural heritage but may also contribute to the economic well-being of local communities (Senarat et al., 2013). Data reported by Ahdiat (2024), based on Indonesia's textile industry statistics, indicate that the country's textile export volume increased by 6.16% during January–May 2024 compared with the same period in the previous year. However, export value declined by 2.66% over the same period. Although these figures reflect the national textile industry rather than ENT woven fabrics specifically, they illustrate the broader challenges of strengthening the competitiveness and market value of Indonesian textile products.

Against this background, Perceived Government Support and influencer marketing are important factors to consider in efforts to increase the visibility and marketability of ENT woven fabrics. Perceived Government Support refers to consumers' perceptions of government efforts to support local artisans and the development of woven-fabric businesses, including through training programs, financial assistance, and supportive policies. Meanwhile, influencer marketing uses social media personalities to communicate product-related information and reach broader audiences (Castillo-Abdul et al., 2020; Castillo-Abdul & Romero-Rodriguez, 2021; Hudders et al., 2021; Jin et al., 2019). These approaches are relevant to the consumer decision-making process described in the AIDA (Attention, Interest, Desire, Action) model, which emphasizes the importance of attracting consumer attention as an initial stage in generating purchase interest (Baber, 2022). The combination of these two approaches may increase the visibility and accessibility of ENT woven fabrics to potential consumers, thereby creating opportunities to strengthen their market position and increase purchase intention.

The interaction between Perceived Government Support, influencer marketing, and storytelling may provide a basis for understanding how consumers develop purchase intentions toward ENT woven fabrics. However, the theoretical mechanism underlying these

relationships requires further explanation. This study draws on Narrative Transportation Theory (Green & Brock, 2000; van Laer et al., 2014) to explain how narratives can shape consumers' responses to products. The theory suggests that consumers may become cognitively and emotionally engaged when exposed to a compelling narrative, potentially influencing how they interpret the meanings conveyed through that narrative. In the context of ENT woven fabrics, stories about artisans, weaving processes, cultural meanings, and local identity can help consumers understand the product beyond its functional attributes (Bietti et al., 2019; Crespo et al., 2023; Júnior et al., 2023). In this context, storytelling refers to the use of narratives to communicate product-related meanings, whereas narrative transportation describes the consumer's psychological engagement with a story. Because the present study measures consumers' perceived narrative experience rather than modeling transportation as a separate construct, Narrative Transportation Theory is used as an interpretive lens for the storytelling mechanism, not as a theory whose central psychological process is directly tested. Although previous studies have demonstrated the potential of storytelling to strengthen emotional connections between consumers and products, empirical evidence remains limited regarding its mediating role in the relationships between Perceived Government Support, influencer marketing, and purchase intention, particularly in the context of regional cultural products. Previous research has often examined storytelling as a communication or promotional strategy. However, how storytelling may connect perceived institutional support and influencer communication with consumers' purchase intentions remains insufficiently explored. This research gap is particularly relevant to ENT woven fabrics because their value is closely associated with cultural identity, craftsmanship, and the meanings embedded in their motifs and production practices (Chantamool et al., 2023; Crespo et al., 2023; Granitz & Forman, 2015; Khater et al., 2025; Lisboa et al., 2025).

This study contributes to the literature in three ways. First, drawing on Narrative Transportation Theory as an interpretive lens, it examines how consumers' perceived narrative experience of ENT woven fabrics (hereafter, Storytelling) may connect Perceived Government Support and influencer marketing with consumers' purchase intentions. Second, it extends narrative-based consumer research to a culturally embedded regional product, highlighting the role of narratives in communicating cultural meanings and product identity. Third, it brings Perceived Government Support and influencer marketing together as two distinct antecedents in a single mediation framework, enabling an examination of their direct and indirect relationships with purchase intention through storytelling. Thus, the contribution of this study lies not merely in combining established variables, but also in examining the mediating role of storytelling in the relationship between institutional and digital marketing-related factors and consumer purchase intention. Based on this framework, the study examines the direct and indirect relationships among Perceived Government Support, influencer marketing, storytelling, and purchase intention toward ENT woven fabrics. Consistent with the cross-sectional survey design, the outcome examined is purchase intention, a psychological precursor of purchasing behavior, rather than actual purchasing behavior.

2. Literature Review & Hypothesis Development

2.1 Perceived Government Support as a Market Catalyst

Government policies can provide institutional support to help businesses overcome obstacles such as post-pandemic disruptions (Agarwal et al., 2023). In the handicraft sector, appropriate government support can help strengthen the resilience and development of micro, small, and medium enterprises (Agarwal et al., 2023). Such support may also create opportunities for artisans to improve product quality and communicate their stories and cultural heritage more effectively.

Perceived Government Support may also be associated with consumers' awareness of storytelling practices among local artisans (Chantamool et al., 2023). Through training and institutional support, artisans may develop better capabilities to communicate the stories behind their products. For example, artisans who receive relevant training may be better able to explain the weaving process and the cultural significance of individual motifs, helping consumers understand and appreciate the cultural value of woven fabrics (Gasparin et al., 2022). Perceived Government Support may also be reflected in opportunities for artisans to showcase their products and cultural narratives through exhibitions and online promotional activities (Richards & King, 2022). These activities may help communicate the cultural identity of woven fabrics and strengthen consumer engagement. Based on these arguments, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H1a: Perceived Government Support is positively associated with purchase intention.

H1b: Perceived Government Support is positively associated with storytelling.

2.2 Influencer Marketing and Digital Engagement

Influencer marketing draws on social influence and electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) to communicate product-related information and shape consumer perceptions (X. Wang et al., 2012). Empirical research in the fashion apparel industry indicates that Instagram page aesthetics, active user interaction, and collaboration with trusted social media influencers can contribute to online sales conversion strategies (Bharti, 2021). Furthermore, a meta-analytic review confirms that influencer characteristics, content attributes, and follower characteristics play important roles in shaping consumer responses, including purchase intention and purchase behavior (Pan et al., 2025). Authenticity in influencer content (e.g. showcasing the weaving process) can increase consumer trust (Kapoor et al., 2021; Riwu et al., 2024).

Influencers can play an important role in communicating the stories behind ENT woven fabrics. By sharing personal experiences and product-related narratives, influencers can provide context that makes these products more meaningful and relatable to their followers. Storytelling in influencer content may not only attract attention but also encourage audiences to develop an appreciation of the cultural values associated with the products (Gasparin et al., 2022). For example, an influencer who visits a weaving village and shares the experiences of local artisans can introduce audiences to the craftsmanship and cultural significance behind a woven fabric. Such narratives may evoke empathy and interest in the product, potentially encouraging consumers to consider purchasing it.

The effectiveness of influencer marketing may also depend on how well the content reflects the cultural values of its target audience (Lisboa et al., 2025). Consumers may be more inclined to engage with brands and products that reflect their cultural identities and values (Zhou et

al., 2021). Therefore, influencers who communicate the cultural meaning of ENT woven fabrics through relevant and authentic narratives may strengthen consumers' understanding and appreciation of these products. This highlights the importance of storytelling in influencer marketing, as it provides a means of connecting product information with cultural meaning and consumer responses. Based on these arguments, the following hypotheses are proposed:
H2a: Influencer marketing is positively associated with purchase intention.
H2b: Influencer marketing is positively associated with storytelling.

2.3 Storytelling as a Narrative Mediator

Narrative Transportation Theory provides the main theoretical perspective for understanding the role of storytelling in this study. The theory explains how engagement with a narrative can involve consumers cognitively and emotionally, allowing them to become immersed in the story and its meaning (Green & Brock, 2000) (Green & Sestir, 2017) . In the context of ENT woven fabrics, stories about artisans' expertise, weaving processes, cultural significance, motifs, and personal experiences can help consumers interpret the product as more than a functional commodity. Such narratives can help consumers develop emotional and cognitive connections with the cultural meaning represented by the product (Green & Sestir, 2017). Storytelling is therefore positioned in this study not merely as a promotional technique, but as a communication mechanism through which product information and cultural values can be conveyed as meaningful consumer experiences. Perceived Government Support may provide opportunities for training, exhibitions, promotional activities, and other forms of communication through which narratives about woven fabrics can be developed and disseminated. Influencer marketing can provide an additional digital channel through which these narratives reach wider audiences. When these sources of support and communication are expressed through relevant and engaging narratives, consumers may become more involved with the product and its cultural meaning.

In this study, it is important to distinguish storytelling as a communication approach from narrative transportation as a psychological process. Storytelling refers to the use of stories to communicate the cultural meaning, craftsmanship, and identity associated with East Nusa Tenggara (ENT) woven fabrics. Narrative transportation, in contrast, refers to the extent to which individuals become mentally and emotionally immersed in a narrative. Accordingly, storytelling provides the narrative content through which consumers can engage with the cultural meaning of woven fabrics, while imaginative immersion represents a psychological aspect associated with narrative transportation. In the present study, imaginative immersion is captured by a single indicator (ST4) within the Storytelling measure rather than being modeled as a separate latent variable positioned between storytelling and purchase intention. Because the Storytelling measure combines perceived characteristics of the narrative (cultural meaning, clarity and coherence, and authenticity) with consumers' responses to it (emotional engagement and imaginative immersion), the construct is more precisely understood as consumers' perceived narrative experience of ENT woven fabrics than as pure storytelling content. For readability, the label "Storytelling" is retained throughout the manuscript, but it refers to this perceived narrative experience. Accordingly, the study does not claim to have empirically validated narrative transportation as the psychological process linking storytelling

and purchase intention; Narrative Transportation Theory is used to explain why such a perceived narrative experience may be associated with purchase intention.

This mechanism provides the basis for the mediating role of storytelling. Rather than assuming that Perceived Government Support or influencer marketing automatically produces purchase intention, the proposed framework suggests that their relationships with purchase intention may partly operate through the narratives used to communicate the cultural and experiential value of woven fabrics. Storytelling can make product information more meaningful and strengthen consumers' engagement with the product, which may subsequently contribute to purchase intention. Previous research has also indicated that storytelling can enrich consumer experiences and interactions with products (Fitzgerald & Green, 2017; Green & Sestir, 2017; Kaur et al., 2024; Winkler et al., 2023). In addition, storytelling may increase consumers' perceptions of product value by helping them understand the craftsmanship, cultural heritage, and meanings embedded in a product (Gasparin et al., 2022). When consumers recognize the cultural heritage and effort involved in producing woven fabrics, they may perceive these products as distinctive and meaningful rather than merely functional commodities. These arguments support the proposed relationship between storytelling and purchase intention in the context of ENT woven fabrics. The findings of Zhou et al. (2021) also support the relevance of narrative communication in enriching interactions between sellers and consumers and shaping purchase-related responses. Based on these arguments, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H3: Storytelling is positively associated with purchase intention.

2.4 Synthesizing Strategies for Market Impact

An integrative framework is used in this study to understand the complementary roles of institutional support and digital marketing communication in shaping consumer responses. Perceived Government Support represents the institutional dimension, while influencer marketing represents the digital communication dimension through which product information and cultural narratives can reach consumers. Storytelling connects these two dimensions by providing a narrative approach through which the cultural meaning and value of woven fabrics can be communicated. Thus, the conceptual model distinguishes between the sources of support and communication and the narrative mechanism through which they may influence consumer responses. Within this framework, storytelling is expected to explain how Perceived Government Support and influencer marketing may contribute to purchase intention (Júnior et al., 2023; Pan et al., 2025). The model therefore examines whether storytelling mediates the relationships between these antecedents and purchase intention. This approach is particularly relevant for ENT woven fabrics because consumers may evaluate these products not only according to their functional characteristics but also according to their authenticity, cultural identity, craftsmanship, and meaning. Accordingly, the following mediation hypotheses are proposed.

H4a: Storytelling mediates the relationship between Perceived Government Support and purchase intention.

H4b: Storytelling mediates the relationship between influencer marketing and purchase intention.

3. Methodology

This study employed a quantitative research design using a survey method to examine consumers' perceptions of regional woven fabrics in East Nusa Tenggara (ENT). Specifically, the study investigated the mediating role of storytelling in the relationships between perceived government support, influencer marketing, and purchase intention toward ENT woven fabrics. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire developed based on established measurement scales and adapted to the context of regional woven fabrics. Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) was employed to evaluate the measurement and structural models and to test the proposed hypotheses. This approach was selected to examine the relationships among the study constructs and assess the proposed mediation effects. The criteria used to evaluate the measurement and structural models are presented in Table 2.

Before the main data collection, the questionnaire was reviewed to ensure that the statements were relevant and understandable to the intended respondents. Questionnaire development involved adapting established measurement items to the context of ENT woven fabrics. Previous research has highlighted the importance of expert review and pre-testing in identifying unclear, misleading, or potentially biased questionnaire items (Worthington & Whittaker, 2006). Consistent with established survey-research practice (Chatterjee & Kumar Kar, 2020; Ruel et al., 2016), the questionnaire comprised closed-ended statements measured on a five-point Likert scale (Strongly disagree = 1, Disagree = 2, Somewhat agree = 3, Agree = 4, Strongly agree = 5). The adequacy of the sample size for PLS-SEM was assessed using the inverse square root method (Kock & Hadaya, 2018). Assuming a minimum path coefficient of 0.15 and a 5% significance level, this method requires at least $(2.486/0.15)^2 \approx 275$ observations. The final sample of 347 consumers of woven products in East Nusa Tenggara (ENT) exceeds this requirement and also exceeds the common guideline of five to ten respondents per measurement item (18 items; 90–180 respondents).

3.1. Population and Sampling

The target population of this study consisted of consumers of regional woven fabrics in East Nusa Tenggara (ENT). The study employed a non-probability sampling approach using purposive sampling. Respondents were selected based on criteria relevant to the research objectives, namely individuals who had previously purchased and used woven fabrics. Data were collected through an online questionnaire distributed to respondents in ENT. Selecting respondents with prior purchasing and usage experience ensured that participants had direct experience with the products under investigation and could provide relevant assessments of Perceived Government Support, Influencer Marketing, Storytelling, and Purchase Intention toward regional woven fabrics.

A total of 347 respondents participated in the study. Based on occupation, the respondents consisted of 100 civil servants, 88 private employees, 43 students, and 116 respondents from other occupational groups. In terms of gender, 189 respondents were male and 158 were female. The largest age group consisted of respondents aged 25–30 years, representing 45.40% of the sample. In addition, 43.7% of respondents had an undergraduate educational background. Because this study employed non-probability purposive sampling, the sample

was not intended to statistically represent all consumers of woven fabrics in ENT. Therefore, the findings should be interpreted in relation to the characteristics of the respondents and the regional context of the study. Generalization beyond these characteristics should be made cautiously and requires further research using broader or probability-based sampling approaches.

3.2. Measurement of Constructs

All constructs were specified as reflective latent variables and measured using multiple statements on a five-point Likert scale. The operationalization of each construct was developed to ensure that its indicators reflected the corresponding conceptual definition, as presented in Table 1. Platform performance metrics, such as engagement rate, reach and impressions, conversion rate, and follower growth, were not included as indicators of Influencer Marketing. Similarly, downstream outcomes, such as brand awareness, customer perception, feedback and testimonials, loyalty, and purchase frequency, were excluded because they represent the results of marketing activities and could overlap conceptually with other constructs in the proposed model.

Influencer Marketing was defined as respondents' perceptions of the credibility, content quality, and cultural authenticity of influencers who present ENT woven fabrics. Perceived Government Support was defined as respondents' perceptions of government support for the production, promotion, and marketing of ENT woven fabrics. This construct encompasses perceived policy and regulatory support, funding and training programs, promotional activities and exhibitions, cooperation with the private sector, and responsiveness to feedback from artisans and business actors. Accordingly, the construct captures perceived government support rather than objectively verified government actions or the actual effectiveness of government programs.

Storytelling was operationalized as a perception-based construct that captures consumers' responses to narratives about artisans, weaving processes, motifs, and the cultural meaning of ENT woven fabrics. The construct encompasses five dimensions: cultural meaning conveyed by the narrative, clarity and coherence of the story, emotional engagement, imaginative immersion, and perceived authenticity and personal connection. Three of these dimensions (ST1, ST2, and ST5) describe perceived characteristics of the narrative, whereas two (ST3 and ST4) describe consumers' responses to it. The construct is therefore interpreted as consumers' perceived narrative experience rather than as narrative content alone. Imaginative immersion (ST4) corresponds to one facet of narrative transportation; however, a single indicator cannot capture the full transportation construct, and the Storytelling measure should not be interpreted as a measure of narrative transportation (Appel et al., 2020; Green & Sestir, 2017).

Purchase intention was defined as consumers' willingness and plans to purchase ENT woven fabrics; it is a psychological precursor of purchasing behavior and does not capture actual purchases (Choi, 2020).

The measurement items were adapted from established scales and reworded to refer specifically to ENT woven fabrics, as presented in Table 1. The indicators of Influencer Marketing cover source credibility, attractiveness and perceived similarity, content informativeness, cultural authenticity, and influencer–product fit (Belanche et al., 2021;

Hawkins & Saleem, 2024). Meanwhile, the Storytelling indicators cover the cultural meaning, clarity, emotional engagement, imaginative immersion, and authenticity of the narrative. The questionnaire items were measured using a five-point Likert scale. The number of items retained in the final measurement model, the original sources of the measurement scales, and the adaptation and pre-testing procedures are reported to clarify the instrument development process.

Because some constructs are theoretically related, their empirical distinctness was also assessed using the heterotrait–monotrait ratio (HTMT), as reported in the Results and Discussion section.

Table 1. Conceptual Definition and Indicators of the Research Variables

No	Variable	Conceptual definition	Indicators (perception-based)	Reference
1.	Influencer Marketing (IM)	Respondents' perception of the credibility, content quality and cultural authenticity of influencers who present ENT woven fabrics.	IM1 Credibility (trustworthiness and expertise) IM2 Attractiveness and perceived similarity with followers IM3 Informativeness and quality of the content IM4 Authenticity of the cultural content IM5 Fit between the influencer and woven fabrics	(Belanche et al., 2021; Fihasti & Hartono, 2025; Hawkins & Saleem, 2024; Joshi et al., 2023; Kapoor et al., 2021)
2.	Perceived Government Support (PGS)	Respondents' perception of government programs that support the production, promotion and marketing of ENT woven fabrics.	PGS1 Policy and regulatory support PGS2 Funding, subsidy and training programs PGS3 Promotion, exhibitions and festivals PGS4 Cooperation with the private sector PGS5 Responsiveness to feedback from craftsmen and business actors	(Knieć & Goszczyński, 2022; Wasdi, 2023)

No	Variable	Conceptual definition	Indicators (perception-based)	Reference
3.	Storytelling (ST)	Consumers' perceived narrative experience of stories about artisans, the weaving process, motifs and the cultural meaning of ENT woven fabrics, covering perceived narrative characteristics (ST1, ST2, ST5) and the emotional and imaginative responses they evoke (ST3, ST4).	ST1 Cultural meaning conveyed by the narrative ST2 Clarity and coherence of the story ST3 Emotional engagement evoked by the story ST4 Imaginative immersion in the story ST5 Perceived authenticity and personal connection	(Appel et al., 2020; Green & Sestir, 2017; Júnior et al., 2023)
4.	Purchase Intention (PI)	The consumer's willingness and plan to buy ENT woven fabrics in the near future.	PI1 Willingness to buy PI2 Plan to purchase in the near future PI3 Likelihood of choosing woven fabrics over alternative textile products	(Gupta et al., 2024; Tabassum et al., 2020; Z. Wang, 2024)

Source: Adapted from the references cited; processed by the authors (2026). Platform performance metrics and outcome variables were not used as indicators.

4. Result and Discussion

4.1 Descriptive Analysis

A total of 347 consumers of regional woven fabrics in East Nusa Tenggara (ENT) participated in this study. Based on occupation, the respondents consisted of 100 civil servants, 88 private employees, 43 students, and 116 respondents from other occupational groups. In terms of gender, 189 respondents were male and 158 were female. The largest age group was respondents aged 25–30 years, accounting for 45.40% of the sample. Regarding educational background, the largest proportion of respondents (43.7%) had an undergraduate degree. These characteristics provide an overview of the respondents who participated in the study. The criteria used to evaluate the measurement and structural models are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2. Criteria for evaluating the measurement and structural models

Stage	Measure	Criterion
Indicator reliability	Outer loading	≥ 0.708 preferred; 0.50–0.70 retained only if AVE and CR are satisfied
Internal consistency reliability	Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability (CR)	0.70–0.95 (values above 0.95 may indicate item redundancy)
Convergent validity	Average variance extracted (AVE)	> 0.50
Discriminant validity	Fornell–Larcker criterion; HTMT	√AVE greater than inter-construct correlations; HTMT < 0.90
Collinearity	Inner VIF	< 3 (acceptable < 5)

Stage	Measure	Criterion
Significance of paths	Bootstrapping: t-statistic, p-value, confidence interval	$t > 1.96$, $p < 0.05$, 95% bootstrap CI (5,000 subsamples) excludes zero
Explanatory power	R^2 and adjusted R^2	0.75 substantial; 0.50 moderate; 0.25 weak
Effect size	f^2	0.02 small; 0.15 medium; 0.35 large
Predictive relevance	Q^2 (blindfolding); PLSpredict	$Q^2 > 0$; Q^2predict > 0 and prediction errors lower than the linear-model benchmark
Mediation	Direct, indirect and total effects	Indirect-only, complementary or competitive statistical mediation, judged from 95% bootstrap CIs of direct and indirect effects

Source(s): (Hair et al., 2019, 2021; Henseler et al., 2015, 2016; Shmueli et al., 2019; Zhao et al., 2010)

4.1 Measurement Model Testing

The measurement model was evaluated based on the criteria presented in Table 2. Indicator reliability was assessed using outer loadings. The individual indicator loadings reported in Table 4 range from 0.772 to 0.875, exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.708. Convergent validity was assessed using the average variance extracted (AVE). As shown in Table 3, the AVE values ranged from 0.744 to 0.809, exceeding the minimum threshold of 0.50. Internal consistency reliability was also assessed using composite reliability (CR) and Cronbach's alpha. The CR values ranged from 0.936 to 0.955, while Cronbach's alpha values ranged from 0.831 to 0.916. All values exceeded the recommended minimum threshold of 0.70. However, the CR value for Purchase Intention (0.955) was slightly above the recommended upper threshold of 0.95, which may indicate potential item redundancy (Hair et al., 2021). Therefore, this result should be considered when interpreting the measurement quality of this construct. Discriminant validity was assessed using the Fornell–Larcker criterion and the heterotrait–monotrait ratio (HTMT) (Henseler et al., 2015). As presented in Table 3, the square roots of the AVE values for Perceived Government Support (PGS = 0.863), Influencer Marketing (IM = 0.865), Purchase Intention (PI = 0.899), and Storytelling (ST = 0.866) were greater than their respective correlations with the other constructs. Thus, the Fornell–Larcker criterion was satisfied. Nevertheless, the correlation between Storytelling and Purchase Intention was relatively high (0.841), although it remained below the square root of the AVE for both constructs. Therefore, HTMT was also examined as an additional assessment of discriminant validity. As shown in Table 5, the HTMT values ranged from 0.561 to 0.858, with the value for the Storytelling–Purchase Intention pair being 0.646. All values were below the threshold of 0.90, indicating that the constructs were empirically distinguishable. The results of the measurement and structural models are illustrated in Figure 1.

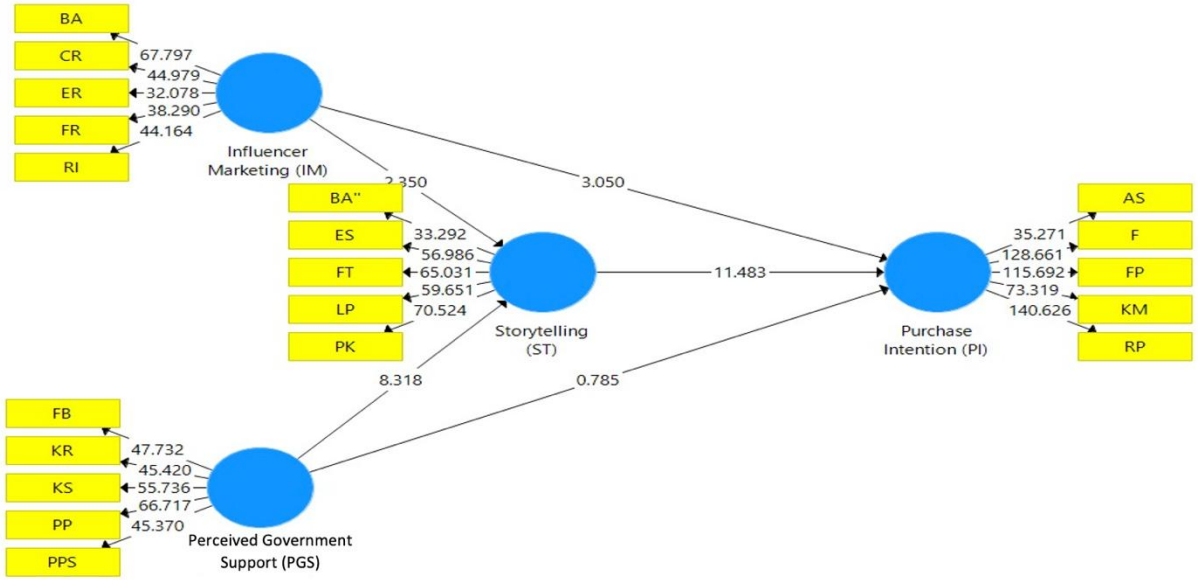
4.2 Structural Model Testing

The structural model was evaluated after assessing the measurement model. Path coefficients, t-statistics, p-values, and 95% bootstrap confidence intervals (CIs) were obtained through bootstrapping with 5,000 subsamples; the CIs were computed as $\beta \pm 1.96 \times$ bootstrap standard error. The results are presented in Table 6. The direct effect of Perceived Government Support (PGS) on Purchase Intention (PI) (H1a) was positive but not statistically significant ($\beta = 0.049$; $t = 0.785$; $p = 0.433$). However, PGS had a positive and statistically significant association with Storytelling (ST) (H1b: $\beta = 0.574$; $t = 8.318$; $p < 0.001$). Influencer Marketing (IM) also had a positive and statistically significant association with ST (H2b: $\beta = 0.222$; $t = 2.350$; $p = 0.019$).

Furthermore, IM (H2a: β = 0.166; t = 3.050; p = 0.002) and ST (H3: β = 0.695; t = 11.483; p < 0.001) had positive and statistically significant associations with PI.

The specific indirect effects of PGS on PI through ST (H4a: β = 0.399; t = 6.015; p < 0.001) and IM on PI through ST (H4b: β = 0.154; t = 2.525; p = 0.012) were also positive and statistically significant. Therefore, H1a was not supported, whereas H1b, H2a, H2b, H3, H4a, and H4b were supported. The model yielded R^2 values of 0.728 for PI and 0.573 for ST (adjusted R^2 = 0.726 and 0.571, respectively). The direct, indirect, and total effects are presented in Table 7, while additional indicators of model quality are reported in Tables 8 and 9.

Figure 1. Modelling Testing



Source(s): Processed primary data (2026)

Table 3. Value of average (AVE), Composite reliability (CR) and correlation between variables

Variable	CR	AVE	PGS	IM	PI	ST
Perceived Government Support (PGS)	0.936	0.744	0.863			
Influencer Marketing (IM)	0.937	0.748	0.758	0.865		
Purchase Intention (PI)	0.927	0.745	0.691	0.660	0.899	
Storytelling (ST)	0.937	0.749	0.743	0.685	0.841	0.866

Source(s): Processed primary data (2026)

Table 4. Indicator loadings, reliability coefficients and collinearity of the measurement model

Construct	Indicator	Outer loading	Outer VIF	Cronbach's α	CR	AVE
Perceived Government Support (PGS)	PGS1	0.831	1.903	0.854	0.936	0.744
	PGS2	0.919	3.399			
	PGS3	0.877	2.974			
	PGS4	0.871	2.798			
	PGS5	0.852	3.122			
Influencer Marketing (IM)	IM1	0.859	2.271	0.831	0.937	0.748
	IM2	0.924	1.386			
	IM3	0.844	2.086			
	IM4	0.859	2.024			

	IM5	0.708	2.766			
Storytelling (ST)	ST1	0.739	2.191	0.916	0.937	0.749
	ST2	0.780	2.377			
	ST3	0.823	1.848			
	ST4	0.794	3.058			
	ST5	0.722	1.848			
Purchase Intention (PI)	PI1	0.759	3.058	0.898	0.955	0.809
	PI2	0.724	3.844			
	PI3	0.768	3.649			

Source(s): Processed primary data (2026)

Table 5. Heterotrait–monotrait ratio (HTMT) of correlations

Construct	PGS	IM	PI	ST
Perceived Government Support (PGS)				
Influencer Marketing (IM)	0.858			
Purchase Intention (PI)	0.784	0.786		
Storytelling (ST)	0.622	0.561	0.862	

Source(s): Processed primary data (2026)

Table 6. Path coefficients, bootstrap confidence intervals and hypothesis tests

Hypothesis	Path	β	t-statistic	p-value	95% CI	Result
H1a	PGS → PI	0.049	0.785	0.433	[−0.073; 0.171]	Not supported
H1b	PGS → ST	0.574	8.318	< 0.001	[0.439; 0.709]	Supported
H2a	IM → PI	0.166	3.050	0.002	[0.059; 0.273]	Supported
H2b	IM → ST	0.222	2.350	0.019	[0.037; 0.407]	Supported
H3	ST → PI	0.695	11.483	< 0.001	[0.576; 0.814]	Supported
H4a	PGS → ST → PI	0.399	6.015	< 0.001	[0.269; 0.529]	Supported
H4b	IM → ST → PI	0.154	2.525	0.012	[0.034; 0.274]	Supported

Source(s): Processed primary data (2026)

Table 7. Direct, indirect and total effects and type of mediation

Path	Direct effect	Indirect effect via ST	Total effect	Type of mediation
PGS → PI	β = 0.049 (p = 0.433) 95% CI [−0.073; 0.171]	β = 0.399 (p < 0.001) 95% CI [0.269; 0.529]	β = 0.448 95% CI [LL; UL]	Indirect-only statistical mediation
IM → PI	β = 0.166 (p = 0.002) 95% CI [0.059; 0.273]	β = 0.154 (p = 0.012) 95% CI [0.034; 0.274]	β = 0.320 95% CI [LL; UL]	Complementary statistical mediation

Note: Total effect = direct + indirect effect. 95% CIs are bootstrap confidence intervals computed as β ± 1.96 × bootstrap standard error (5,000 subsamples). Following Zhao et al. (2010), indirect-only statistical mediation is identified when only the CI of the indirect effect excludes zero, and complementary statistical mediation when the CIs of both the direct and indirect effects exclude zero and both effects have the same sign. Source(s): Processed primary data (2026).

Table 8. Collinearity and effect size of the structural paths

Path	Inner VIF	f^2
PGS	2.354	0.100
IM	2.174	0.144
ST	1.466	0.125
PGS	2.116	0.112
IM	2.116	0.027

Source(s): Processed primary data (2026)

Table 9. Explanatory and predictive power of the model

Construct	R^2	Adjusted R^2	Q^2 (blindfolding)	Q^2predict (construct level)
Purchase Intention (PI)	0.728	0.726	0.363	0.572
Storytelling (ST)	0.573	0.571	0.181	0.441

Source(s): Processed primary data (2026). SRMR (estimated model) = 0.096. Adjusted $R^2 = 1 - (1 - R^2)(n - 1)/(n - k - 1)$, with $n = 347$.

The collinearity assessment indicated that the inner VIF values ranged from 1.466 to 2.354, below the threshold of 3 (Table 8). This suggests that collinearity among the predictors was not a concern. The R^2 values indicate that PGS and IM jointly explain 57.3% of the variance in ST (adjusted $R^2 = 0.571$), while PGS, IM, and ST jointly explain 72.8% of the variance in PI (adjusted $R^2 = 0.726$) (Table 9). Because the sample is large relative to the number of predictors, the adjusted values differ only marginally from the unadjusted R^2 values.

Based on the f^2 thresholds presented in Table 2 (0.02 = small, 0.15 = medium, and 0.35 = large), all structural-path effect sizes were classified as small. The f^2 values were 0.100 for PGS → PI, 0.144 for IM → PI, 0.125 for ST → PI, 0.112 for PGS → ST, and 0.027 for IM → ST. Although the effect size of IM → PI approached the medium threshold, it remained below 0.15 and was therefore classified as small. These findings indicate that the interpretation of the structural relationships should consider both the path coefficients and their corresponding effect sizes.

The standardized path coefficients indicate positive associations between Storytelling and Purchase Intention ($\beta = 0.695$) and between Perceived Government Support and Storytelling ($\beta = 0.574$). However, standardized path coefficients and effect sizes represent different aspects of the structural model. A relatively large path coefficient does not necessarily indicate a medium or large unique effect size. As reported in Table 8, the f^2 values for Storytelling → Purchase Intention (0.125) and Perceived Government Support → Storytelling (0.112) are small according to the thresholds in Table 2. Influencer Marketing also has small effect sizes for Storytelling ($f^2 = 0.027$) and Purchase Intention ($f^2 = 0.144$), with the latter approaching but remaining below the medium-effect threshold. Therefore, the interpretation of the structural relationships should consider both the path coefficients and the corresponding f^2 values.

The mediation analysis is summarized in Table 7. For PGS, the direct effect on PI was positive but not statistically significant ($\beta = 0.049$; $p = 0.433$), whereas the indirect effect through ST was positive and statistically significant ($\beta = 0.399$; $p < 0.001$). Because the 95% bootstrap CI of the indirect effect excluded zero (0.269; 0.529), whereas the CI of the direct effect included zero ([−0.073; 0.171]), this pattern is classified as indirect-only statistical mediation (Zhao et al., 2010). The total effect was 0.448. For IM, both the direct effect ($\beta = 0.166$; $p = 0.002$) and the

indirect effect through ST (β = 0.154; p = 0.012) were positive and statistically significant. Because the 95% CIs of both the direct effect ([0.059; 0.273]) and the indirect effect ([0.034; 0.274]) excluded zero and both effects were positive, this pattern is classified as complementary statistical mediation (Zhao et al., 2010). The total effect was 0.320. Following Zhao et al. (2010), mediation types were determined from the bootstrap confidence intervals rather than from the variance accounted for (VAF). Because the data were cross-sectional, these findings represent statistical mediation patterns consistent with the proposed relationships; they do not establish causal ordering.

4.3 Discussion

This study examines the relationships among Perceived Government Support (PGS), Influencer Marketing (IM), Storytelling (ST), and Purchase Intention (PI) in the context of East Nusa Tenggara (ENT) woven fabrics. The findings highlight the role of cultural narratives in connecting institutional support and digital marketing activities with consumers' purchase intention. In particular, Storytelling has the strongest positive association with Purchase Intention, while Perceived Government Support is associated with Purchase Intention indirectly through Storytelling. These findings emphasize that promoting woven fabrics requires more than increasing product visibility; it also involves communicating the cultural meanings and values embedded in the products.

The findings show that Perceived Government Support is not significantly associated with Purchase Intention directly (β = 0.049; p = 0.433), indicating that H1a is not supported. Although various promotional activities, including festivals, exhibitions, and cross-sector collaborations, have been stipulated in ENT Provincial Regulation Number 7 of 2021 on the Advancement of Regional Culture (ENT Provincial Government, 2021), the results suggest that consumers' perceptions of government support are not directly associated with their intention to purchase woven fabrics. One possible explanation, which was not tested in this study, is that purchase intention may depend more strongly on product-related considerations, such as price, the length of the production process, design preferences, and knowledge of the cultural value of woven fabrics, than on perceptions of government support. The strong association of Indonesian traditional textiles with batik in the national fashion market may also limit the visibility of regional woven fabrics. However, the present study did not directly measure policy implementation or consumers' exposure to specific government programs. Therefore, these possible explanations should be interpreted as contextual considerations rather than established causes of the unsupported direct relationship.

In contrast, Perceived Government Support has a positive and significant association with Storytelling (β = 0.574; p < 0.001), supporting H1b. This finding indicates that respondents who perceive stronger government support also tend to evaluate storytelling about ENT woven fabrics more positively. Government communication and promotional activities may provide opportunities to introduce local products, communicate cultural information, and strengthen relationships with communities. This interpretation is consistent with Nugraha et al. (2022), who discussed the role of government communication in information disclosure, participatory dialogue, and community relationships. Richards and King (2022) also showed how festivals can strengthen local identity and create meaningful experiences, while Khater et al. (2025)

highlighted storytelling as a means of strengthening identity and cultural revitalization. In this context, storytelling can serve as a communication link through which the cultural significance of woven fabrics becomes more visible to consumers. Digital communication skills are also relevant to this process. Frau-Meigs (2022) describes transliteracy as the ability to understand and produce narratives across different media in the context of digital convergence. This perspective highlights the importance of presenting cultural narratives through appropriate digital platforms and formats. Nevertheless, the present findings reflect consumers' perceptions of government support and storytelling, not the verified effectiveness of particular government interventions.

The results also indicate that Influencer Marketing has a positive and significant association with Purchase Intention ($\beta = 0.166$; $p = 0.002$), supporting H2a. Although the coefficient is smaller than that of Storytelling, the finding suggests that influencer communication is relevant to consumers' intention to purchase ENT woven fabrics. Influencers can help introduce products to wider audiences and communicate product information through content that combines credibility, personal experience, and visual presentation. Fihasti and Hartono (2025) found that influencer credibility, reflected in trustworthiness, expertise, similarity, and attractiveness, positively affects brand perceptions. Similarly, An et al. (2024) highlighted the relationship between consumer trust, purchase intention, and willingness to pay. Belanche et al. (2021) also discussed the importance of persuasive messages and personal presentation in building audience trust. Furthermore, Hawkins and Saleem (2024) emphasized the relevance of influencer-brand fit in strengthening trust and purchase intention. For ENT woven fabrics, these findings suggest that influencer collaborations should go beyond displaying products or presenting Outfit of the Day (OOTD) content. Influencers can also communicate the motifs, production processes, artisans' skills, and cultural meanings behind the fabrics. Such content may help consumers recognize the value of woven fabrics beyond their appearance.

Storytelling has the strongest positive association with Purchase Intention ($\beta = 0.695$; $p < 0.001$), supporting H3. This finding is particularly relevant to regional woven fabrics because their value extends beyond their physical characteristics to include cultural identity, traditional motifs, artisans' skills, and production processes. These attributes may not be fully understood through product displays alone. Storytelling provides a way to communicate these meanings and make the cultural value of woven fabrics more accessible to consumers. The finding is consistent with research emphasizing the role of authentic narratives and emotional engagement in shaping consumer responses (Crespo et al., 2023; Júnior et al., 2023). Gill-Simmen and Xiao (2025) show that the strength of a brand story is not only determined by its narrative elements, but also by its ability to build emotional appeal and present visually appealing content. This finding is also supported by Tabassum et al. (2020), who found that narrative advertising was more effective in attracting the attention of Generation Z, a digital native group that now dominates the social media space and has become an important bridge in the promotion of cultural products such as weaving. In addition, Lestari et al. (2025) discussed how social media content can support positive perceptions of Sumbanese ikat weaving. The relationship between Storytelling and Purchase Intention can also be understood

through Narrative Transportation Theory. In this study, imaginative immersion in the story, represented by indicator ST4, is treated as a dimension of the Storytelling construct rather than as a separate latent variable or independent mediator. Therefore, the findings demonstrate an association between consumers' overall perceived narrative experience and Purchase Intention; they do not provide a separate empirical test of narrative transportation as a mediator, and the transportation-based explanation offered here remains a theoretical interpretation. Moreover, because two Storytelling indicators capture respondents' own responses to the narrative (ST3 and ST4), part of this association may reflect shared evaluative tendencies measured from the same respondents at the same time.

Influencer Marketing also has a positive and significant association with Storytelling ($\beta = 0.222$; $p = 0.019$), supporting H2b. This suggests that influencers may contribute not only to product promotion but also to communicating the cultural narratives associated with woven fabrics. However, the relatively smaller coefficient compared with Perceived Government Support indicates that the association between Influencer Marketing and Storytelling is more modest in this sample. Previous studies have emphasized the importance of authenticity, emotional connection, and audience engagement in influencer communication (Dondapati & Dehury, 2024). When audiences feel emotionally connected to influencers, a parasocial bond is formed, which is a feeling of familiarity and trust even without direct interaction, which strengthens consumer engagement (Zhou et al., 2021). In the context of weaving, the presence of influencers who are also cultural or fashion experts can strengthen credibility through the B2B influencer marketing approach, which focuses on industry expertise and networks rather than popularity (Cartwright et al., 2022). Other studies have highlighted the contribution of informative and entertaining content, visual presentation, interaction, and shared social identity to audience engagement and brand awareness (Farivar & Wang, 2022; Lisboa et al., 2025; Pan et al., 2025) . In the context of ENT woven fabrics, influencers with an understanding of local culture or fashion may be able to communicate product stories more meaningfully. Their content can connect the traditional identity of woven fabrics with contemporary consumer interests, provided that the cultural information is presented accurately and authentically.

The mediation results further clarify how Perceived Government Support and Influencer Marketing are associated with Purchase Intention through Storytelling. For Perceived Government Support, the indirect effect through Storytelling is positive and significant ($\beta = 0.399$; $p < 0.001$), while the direct effect is not significant. This pattern is consistent with indirect-only statistical mediation and supports H4a. It suggests that the association between perceived government support and purchase intention occurs primarily through consumers' evaluations of storytelling. For Influencer Marketing, both the direct effect ($\beta = 0.166$; $p = 0.002$) and the indirect effect through Storytelling ($\beta = 0.154$; $p = 0.012$) are positive and significant. This pattern is consistent with complementary statistical mediation and supports H4b. The indirect effect is of similar magnitude to the direct effect, indicating that Storytelling represents an important part of the relationship between Influencer Marketing and Purchase Intention. These findings are consistent with literature emphasizing the role of storytelling in strengthening brand meaning, consumer engagement, and emotional connections (Crespo et

al., 2023; Granitz & Forman, 2015; Kaur et al., 2024). Storytelling plays an important role in building an emotional connection between brands and consumers through evocative and authentic stories. This approach not only strengthens the perception of product value, but also builds consumer trust and loyalty (Menon et al., 2024). Nevertheless, storytelling should communicate cultural information accurately, as misleading or biased narratives may undermine consumer trust (Júnior et al., 2023). For cultural products such as ENT woven fabrics, authentic storytelling can help communicate the history, identity, and symbolic meanings associated with the products (Chantamool et al., 2023). Lestari et al. (2025) reinforce these findings by showing that the use of social media, especially Instagram, plays an important role in shaping a positive perception of Sumbanese ikat weaving, through informative and interesting content. Thus, digital media can be an effective means to expand market reach and strengthen the position of ENT weaving as a cultural heritage product with competitive potential.

Overall, the findings suggest that marketing strategies for ENT woven fabrics could place greater emphasis on communicating cultural narratives alongside institutional promotion and influencer collaborations. Government-supported activities, such as training programs and exhibitions, could incorporate storytelling that explains the motifs, production processes, artisans' experiences, and cultural significance of woven fabrics. Influencer collaborations could also prioritize credible communicators who are able to present these narratives accurately and connect them with contemporary consumer interests. These implications should be considered in light of the study's limitations. The data were collected through a cross-sectional survey using purposive sampling, and all constructs were measured through respondents' self-reported perceptions at one point in time. In addition, the correlation between Storytelling and Purchase Intention is relatively high ($r = 0.841$). Therefore, the findings indicate statistical associations and mediation patterns consistent with the proposed model, but do not establish causal relationships. It is also possible that consumers who already have stronger purchase intentions are more receptive to cultural narratives about woven fabrics.

4.4 Practical Implications

The findings offer practical insights for local governments, MSME actors, and other stakeholders seeking to strengthen the competitiveness and market appeal of East Nusa Tenggara (ENT) woven fabrics. Although this study does not directly evaluate the implementation or effectiveness of government programs, the results highlight the relevance of consumers' perceptions of government support in relation to storytelling and purchase intention. Local governments may consider supporting digital storytelling training for artisans and MSME actors, facilitating cultural exhibitions, and developing promotional campaigns that communicate the cultural heritage and identity embedded in woven fabrics. Cross-cultural collaboration and digital innovation may also provide opportunities to expand the market reach of cultural products while preserving local cultural identity (Singh, 2024). These initiatives are consistent with research highlighting the interrelated roles of cultural imagery, storytelling, branding strategies, digital communication, shared value creation, and sustainability in tourism and creative economy development (Pachucki et al., 2021; Parani &

Juliana, 2023). However, whether these initiatives strengthen consumers' purchase intention or translate into actual purchases requires further evaluation.

For MSME actors and local artisans, the findings emphasize the importance of incorporating storytelling into product marketing. Rather than focusing exclusively on product appearance and price, promotional materials can communicate the meaning of traditional motifs, the weaving process, artisans' experiences, and the cultural identity associated with each product. This approach may help consumers recognize the cultural and symbolic value of ENT woven fabrics. Since storytelling has the strongest association with purchase intention in this study, MSME actors may consider using consistent narratives across social media, product packaging, exhibitions, and other promotional channels.

In addition, collaborations with influencers who have an understanding of local culture, fashion, or traditional products may provide opportunities to strengthen product communication and audience engagement. Influencers can present woven fabrics through authentic and informative content that combines product displays with explanations of cultural meaning and production processes. Previous research has highlighted the importance of emotional attachment and trust in influencer communication, particularly when content is perceived as authentic and relevant to its audience (Belanche et al., 2021; Zhou et al., 2021). Conversely, promotional content perceived as manipulative may generate audience resistance and negative responses. Therefore, influencer selection and content development should prioritize credibility, relevance, transparency, and respect for the cultural values represented by ENT woven fabrics.

Overall, the findings suggest that government promotion, influencer collaboration, and MSME marketing activities could be more closely integrated through consistent and authentic storytelling. Such an approach may help communicate the cultural value of ENT woven fabrics while expanding their visibility among potential consumers. Nevertheless, these practical implications should be considered as recommendations based on the observed statistical relationships, rather than as evidence that the proposed strategies will necessarily increase sales or purchase intention.

5. Conclusion and Suggestion

This study provides an understanding of the relationships among Perceived Government Support, Influencer Marketing, Storytelling, and Purchase Intention in the context of East Nusa Tenggara (ENT) woven fabrics. The results show that Perceived Government Support does not have a significant direct association with Purchase Intention ($\beta = 0.049$; $p = 0.433$), but has a positive and significant association with Storytelling ($\beta = 0.574$; $p < 0.001$). This finding suggests that perceived government support is associated with purchase intention primarily through storytelling rather than through a direct relationship. Meanwhile, Influencer Marketing has positive and significant associations with both Purchase Intention ($\beta = 0.166$; $p = 0.002$) and Storytelling ($\beta = 0.222$; $p = 0.019$). Storytelling has the strongest direct association with Purchase Intention in the tested model ($\beta = 0.695$; $p < 0.001$). The mediation analysis further indicates that Storytelling mediates the relationship between Perceived Government Support and Purchase Intention through indirect-only statistical mediation ($\beta = 0.399$; $p <$

0.001), while it mediates the relationship between Influencer Marketing and Purchase Intention through complementary statistical mediation ($\beta = 0.154$; $p = 0.012$). The model explains 72.8% of the variance in Purchase Intention and 57.3% of the variance in Storytelling. The theoretical contribution of this study lies in examining consumers' perceived narrative experience (Storytelling) as a statistical mediator that connects perceived institutional support and influencer-based communication with Purchase Intention in the context of culturally embedded products. From the perspective of Narrative Transportation Theory, imaginative immersion in the story (ST4) corresponds to one facet of narrative transportation and is included in the operationalization of Storytelling. However, because narrative transportation was not modeled as a separate latent variable, the findings should be interpreted as evidence concerning the Storytelling construct as operationalized in this study, rather than as an independent test of narrative transportation as a distinct psychological mediator. Accordingly, the study contributes to Narrative Transportation Theory only indirectly: it shows that a narrative-experience construct that includes an immersion facet is associated with purchase intention, but it does not validate transportation as the psychological process through which storytelling operates. This perspective highlights the relevance of cultural narratives in communicating the meaning and identity of regional woven fabrics and in shaping consumer responses. Nevertheless, given the cross-sectional research design, the findings represent statistical associations and mediation patterns rather than established causal relationships.

Based on these findings, local governments are encouraged to support promotional activities that communicate the cultural heritage of ENT woven fabrics, including digital storytelling training, cultural exhibitions, and collaborations with relevant stakeholders. MSME actors and artisans may strengthen their marketing strategies by presenting the stories behind traditional motifs, production processes, artisans' experiences, and the cultural meanings of their products. Collaborations with credible influencers who understand local culture may also help communicate these narratives to wider audiences. These recommendations should be considered as practical directions derived from the observed relationships, and their effectiveness in increasing actual purchases requires further evaluation.

This study has several limitations that should be considered in future research. First, the cross-sectional design does not allow causal relationships to be established. Future studies could use longitudinal or experimental designs to examine how storytelling and marketing communication relate to changes in purchase intention over time. Second, the study used purposive sampling and self-reported responses; therefore, future research could involve broader samples and additional data sources to strengthen the generalizability of the findings. Third, future studies could examine narrative transportation as a separate construct to investigate its distinct role in the relationship between storytelling and consumer responses. Finally, further research could assess actual purchasing behavior and evaluate the implementation of government support programs to determine whether the observed relationships are reflected in market outcomes.

6. Limitations and Future Research

This study has several limitations that should be considered when interpreting the findings. First, the research was conducted in Indonesia, focusing specifically on East Nusa Tenggara

(ENT) woven fabrics. Therefore, the findings may not be directly generalizable to other cultural contexts, regions, or types of traditional products. Future research could extend the investigation to other regions and cultural products to examine whether the relationships identified in this study remain consistent across different settings.

Second, this study employed a quantitative approach using an online survey with a cross-sectional design. The data capture respondents' perceptions at a single point in time and do not reflect changes in consumers' intentions or actual purchasing behavior over a longer period. Furthermore, all variables were measured simultaneously through self-reported responses. Consequently, the mediation findings represent statistical mediation patterns rather than established causal relationships, and the possibility of common method bias cannot be fully excluded. In addition, the SRMR value exceeded the conservative threshold of 0.08, so the overall model fit should be interpreted with caution. Future studies could employ longitudinal or experimental designs and incorporate additional data sources to examine changes in consumer responses and strengthen the assessment of potential common method bias.

Third, the respondent profile was dominated by younger and highly educated individuals. This characteristic may influence how respondents perceive digital storytelling and influencer marketing, particularly because their familiarity with digital media may differ from that of older consumers or individuals with lower levels of digital literacy. Future research could involve more diverse respondent groups to examine whether storytelling and influencer marketing are perceived differently across demographic segments.

Fourth, this study did not separately examine the effectiveness of storytelling across different social media platforms, such as Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube. Each platform may have different audience characteristics and communication formats. In addition, the study did not specifically assess the quality and structure of narratives used by influencers, making it difficult to identify which narrative elements are more strongly associated with consumer purchase intention. Future research could compare storytelling strategies across platforms and examine the roles of content type, visual quality, narrative structure, and communication style in shaping consumer responses.

Fifth, the Storytelling construct in this study combines several dimensions, including cultural meaning, clarity and coherence, emotional engagement, imaginative immersion, perceived authenticity, and personal connection. Although imaginative immersion (ST4) reflects one facet of narrative transportation, narrative transportation was not modeled as a separate latent construct. Therefore, the present operationalization does not allow its distinct contribution to be examined independently from the other dimensions of storytelling. Future research could measure narrative transportation as a separate psychological construct to determine whether consumers' cognitive and emotional immersion in a story contributes to purchase intention beyond other storytelling characteristics, such as clarity, authenticity, and cultural meaning. Such studies could re-specify the model with narrative transportation measured by an established multi-item scale (Green & Brock, 2000) as a distinct construct positioned between narrative characteristics and purchase intention.

Finally, future research could develop experimental models to examine interactions between different influencer types, storytelling styles, and demographic segments. Such investigations may provide a more detailed understanding of how culture-based marketing strategies can be designed for different consumer groups and market contexts.

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