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Influencers Promote MSMEs: How Source Credibility and Para-Social Interaction Affect Purchase Intention during the COVID-19 Pandemic

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Abstract:

This study aims to measure whether influencers can impact purchase intention in Micro Small Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) during the COVID-19 Pandemic. This study uses an online survey distributed to 400 respondents with millennial criteria who like to watch video reviews on YouTube. PLS-SEM is used in the analysis of this research, and with two stages carried out, namely measurement and structural model. The result is that the hypothesis of variable source credibility (attractiveness, trustworthiness, expertise) and para-social interaction has a significant effect on purchase intention. Furthermore, there are differences in perspectives between men and women regarding trustworthiness and expertise on purchase intention. However, there is no difference in the perspective between men and women regarding attractiveness and para-social interaction on purchase intention. The results of this study propose strategies to choose the right influencers during the COVID-19 pandemic. The novelty of this research lies in applying variable source credibility (attractiveness, trustworthiness, expertise) and para-social interaction on purchase intention, which is moderated by gender.

Keywords: attractiveness, trustworthiness, expertise, para-social interaction, purchase intention.

影响者促进中小微企业：来源可信度和准社会互动如何影响 新冠肺炎大流行期间的购买意向

摘要：

本研究旨在衡量影响者是否可以在新冠肺炎大流行期间影响微型中小型企业(中小微企业)的购买意愿。本研究使用一项在线调查，向400名符合千禧一代标准且喜欢在YouTube上观看视频评论的受访者分发。偏光扫描电镜用于本研究的分析，并进行了两个阶段，即测量和结构模型。结果是可变来源可信度（吸引力、可信度、专业知识）和准社会互动的假设对购买意愿有显著影响。此外，男性和女性在购买意愿的可信度和专业知识方面存在差异。然而，男性和女性对购买意愿的吸引力和准社会互动的看法没有差异。这项研究的结果提出了在新冠肺炎大流行期间选择合适影响者的策略。本研究的新颖之处在于将可变来源的可信

度（吸引力、可信度、专业知识）和准社会互动应用于购买意向，这是由性别调节的。

关键词：吸引力、可信度、专业知识、准社会互动、购买意愿。

1. Introduction

COVID-19, which originated from Wuhan City, China, in December 2019, is the origin of the Pandemic experienced by many countries (Indonesia, 2020). Because of the Pandemic in almost all sectors, the health and economic sectors also experienced a tremendous impact due to the COVID-19 Pandemic (Kompas.com, 2020). According to the Indonesian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, 2020 confirmed that 64.2 million MSMEs, around 50% or 30 million MSMEs, had to close due to the COVID-19 Pandemic (Julianto, 2020). Additionally, MSMEs have an essential and significant contribution to the national economy (GDP) of 61.1% (DKJN, 2020). The following is data regarding the decline in sales of the SME's sector due to COVID-19. The decline in sales in the MSME sector due to COVID-19 based on a survey conducted on 6.405 respondents by the Indonesian Business Development Services Association (ABDSI). A total of 36.7% admitted that there were no sales, 26% realized that there was a decline of more than 60%, and only 3.6% experienced an increase in sales (Jayani, 2020b). MSMEs that have felt the impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic are food and beverage MSMEs (Haryanti, 2020).

Currently, advertising using social media is considered a very effective medium to increase sales (Entrepreneur, 2021). Online media is also growing and can be used by large companies and MSMEs as promotional media (Asikin, 2020). Furthermore, the social media often used is YouTube and occupies the first position in the ten social media that are often used in 2020 (Jayani, 2020a). Then, according to the Katadata Insight Center (KIC) survey, favorite videos on YouTube about Culinary occupy the first position with the most views during the COVID-19 Pandemic, which is 56.5% (Katadata, 2020).

Furthermore, Influencers are also present on social media, one of which is YouTube as a supporter of the sellers to market their products (Freberg et al., 2011). This agrees with the strategy provided by the government if Influencers are a solution for MSMEs to survive during the COVID-19 Pandemic (Corps, 2020; Dahono, 2021). Additionally, influencers in food, beauty, and travel have performed well in 2020 (AnyMind, 2020; MediaDigital, 2021; Mulyani et al., 2021). Then, the popularity gained by bloggers has become a strategy in marketing, namely marketing through influencers, where a brand or business collaborates with them to review their products and promote them through their social media accounts (De Veirman et al., 2017). In addition, a Media Kix survey found that 80% thought that Influencers could be a potential way to take their business to the next level

(Forbes, 2017). This means that this can be an excellent opportunity for an MSME, especially "Dimsanss" MSMEs, to use Influencers with YouTube media to stimulate consumer purchase intention during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

From the above phenomena, currently or empirically, no one has investigated the influence of Influencers on the purchase intention of MSMEs during the COVID-19 Pandemic. Therefore, this study aims to examine whether the use of influencers during the Pandemic can affect the purchase intention in MSMEs (Dimsanss) and is mediated by gender and then what influencers can influence purchase interest using Source Credibility variables (Attractiveness, Trustworthiness, and Expertise) because, in previous studies, it was proven to affect purchase intention (Lyons, 2019; Weismueller et al., 2020). Additionally, the Para-social Interaction variable, known as the way influencers communicate with their followers, has a positive impact on purchase intention (Ferebee, 2008; Zheng et al., 2020) and finally, mediated by gender because it was found that men and women had significant differences in Attractiveness to an influencer (Rebelo, 2017; Samarasinghe, 2018).

2. Literature Review

2.1. Influencer Marketing, Purchase Intention, and Source Credibility

Marketing using Influencers has a significant contribution that can influence potential consumers to buy (Andita et al., 2021; Scott, 2015). The importance of this Influencer has had a positive impact because many consumers seek opinions to make buying decisions (Audrezet et al., 2020). Therefore, these influencers are needed to influence and consider consumers (Lou & Yuan, 2019). Influencers on social media are the first content intermediaries with specifications that have Expertise in a particular field and regularly produce quality content through their social media. Social media has a personality influence on YouTube and Instafamous, more substantial than traditional celebrities (Djafarova & Rushworth, 2017). Influencers are different from conventional stars because an influencer builds his character and popularity by creating content on his social media. Meanwhile, traditional celebrities make their popularity by using their social media to connect with their fans (Weismueller et al., 2020). Moreover, the credibility of a video blogger perceived by Youtube users can increase awareness and attitude toward the brand (Munnukka et al., 2019).

Consumer interest in a product or service can be described by the intention to buy the object or product

(Kotler & Keller, 2009). Buying stake is also the stage where consumers consider several brands regarding what to buy, which will choose the alternative product they like the most (Alalwan, 2018). Buying products or services can also be planned by consumers in the future (Wu et al., 2011). In addition, purchase intention is a strategy that can be used by companies to predict market share and sales that will be obtained (Arifani et al., 2014; Diallo, 2012). Thus, the purchase intention is carried out consciously by consumers and can be used by companies as a marketing strategy.

In previous studies, it was explained that celebrity credibility is a supporting factor of the celebrity itself (Weismueller et al., 2020). The source credibility model can influence to invite and impact e-WOM followers (Ismagilova et al., 2020). Additionally, the more influencers meet these criteria, the more likely they will obtain a response that positively affects purchase intention and vice versa (Samarasinghe, 2018). The positive and significant relationship between Expertise, Attractiveness, and respect is given to celebrities related to consumer purchasing decisions shows that consumers make celebrities their role models (Ifeanyichukwu, 2016). Furthermore, the credibility of the source is very much considered and affects consumers' purchase intentions (Abbas et al., 2018). Source credibility is divided into three, namely, attractiveness, trustworthiness, and expertise (Ohanian, 1990).

2.2. Attractiveness, Trustworthiness, Expertise, Influencers, and Para-Social Interaction

An essential factor in influencing purchase intention and brand image is celebrity attractiveness (Khan, 2018). Additionally, celebrity attractiveness has the nature of being classy, sexy, beautiful, or handsome, attractive, and elegant. Furthermore, Attractiveness has three dimensions: familiarity, similarity, and liking (Shimp, 2013). Attractiveness is also significant for building brand image and influencing purchase intention (Abbas et al., 2018). Furthermore, the Attractiveness of influencers can impact purchase intention (Weismueller et al., 2020). Therefore, an Influencer or Food-Vlogger must have a strong appeal so that consumers are attached to want to purchase the product being reviewed.

The second element in source credibility is Trust. Trustworthiness has dimensions, including being trustworthy and having the integrity, honesty, and confidence of a celebrity (Shimp, 2013). Thus, the more reliable the source, the more significant the positive impact received by the audience (Ifeanyichukwu, 2016). Similar to previous indicators in recent research that the trustworthiness indicator plays a positive role in the purchase intention as in research (Abbas et al., 2018; Dösenberg et al., 2016; Ifeanyichukwu, 2016).

Expertise refers to the endorser's knowledge, experience, or skills (Shimp, 2013). An endorser who is considered an expert on a particular subject is more persuasive in changing the audience's opinion related to

his field of Expertise than an endorser who is regarded as an un-expert. Expertise indicators are expert, experienced, knowledgeable, qualified, and skilled (Ohanian, 1990). Previous research has shown that Expertise positively impacts purchase intention (Dösenberg et al., 2016; Ifeanyichukwu, 2016).

PSI (Para-social Interaction) serves as a liaison between the audience and influencers, namely as a picture of the face-to-face relationship through social media between the two (Horton & Wohl, 1956). PSI directs its followers to establish and form empathic interactions with influencers or celebrities and make it appear as if they know the Influencer (Giles, 2002). Such as posting comments to sending emails, regardless of whether the message was received by a celebrity (Rasmussen, 2018). Social media users can create a relationship with bloggers by frequently following their content published on their social media (Lyons, 2019). The advent of social media begins a strong relationship between followers and celebrities or their influencers (Gong, 2020). PSI, para-social interactions between YouTube followers and bloggers, influence brand perception and physical Attractiveness, and similarities between them positively impact (Lee & Watkins, 2016). The results of previous studies say that para-social interaction has an essential role in influencing the purchase intention or intention of its users (Zheng et al., 2020).

Gender can influence consumers' beliefs, attitudes, ideas, and behavior (Vicente-Molina et al., 2018). Moreover, gender moderates the relationship between source credibility (Abbas et al., 2018; H. M. U. S. R. Samarasinghe, 2018) and para-social interaction (Wasike, 2018) on purchase intention. In previous studies, it was proven that gender has different perceptions between men and women (Abbas et al., 2018; H. M. U. S. R. Samarasinghe, 2018; Wasike, 2018). Thus, women and men will have differences in interpreting and responding to something, including responding to a review. The following hypotheses are taken on this basis:

Hypothesis 1: Attractiveness has a significant impact on purchase intention.

Hypothesis 2: Trustworthiness has a significant impact on purchase intention.

Hypothesis 3: Expertise has a significant impact on purchase intention.

Hypothesis 4: Para-social Interaction has a significant impact on purchase intention.

Hypothesis 5: Gender moderates the relationship between Attractiveness on purchase intention.

Hypothesis 6: Gender moderates the relationship between Trustworthiness on purchase intention.

Hypothesis 7: Gender moderates the relationship between expertise on purchase intention.

Hypothesis 8: Gender moderates the relationship between para-social interaction on purchase intention.

In this study, the researchers used source credibility and para-social interaction variables to measure the purchase intention. Additionally, it uses gender

moderation to see whether there are differences in the perspective between men and women. This research model can be seen in Figure 1.

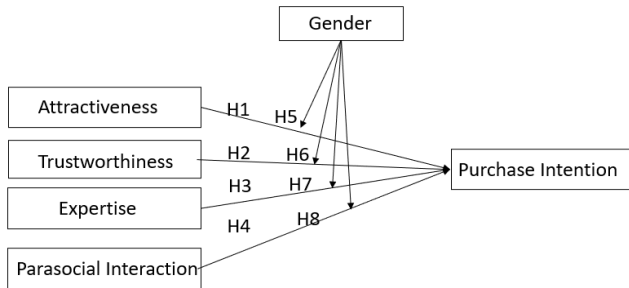


Figure 1. Research model (Developed by the authors)

3. Research Method

To answer the hypothesis developed by this research, it was carried out by distributing questionnaires to 400 millennial respondents who like to watch food reviews by Influencers on YouTube via online, namely, Google Forms. To answer these questions using a 1-5 Likert scale. Starting from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

The research instrument was developed by adopting and adapting from previous research, and this was done

to have a valid and reliable research instrument. Attractiveness was measured by 5 items originating from (Abbas et al., 2018; Lyons, 2019; Terence & Andrews, 2013). Expertise is measured by 4 items originating (Abbas et al., 2018; H. Samarasinghe, 2018; Terence & Andrews, 2013). Trustworthiness with 4 items originating from (Abbas et al., 2018; H. Samarasinghe, 2018; Terence & Andrews, 2013). Personal interaction 3 items from (Lyons, 2019). Purchases intention with 5 items originating from (Abbas et al., 2018; Kotler & Armstrong, 2008). This study was analyzed by considering gender issues and using SEM-PLS.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Respondent Profile

This section will explain how the background of the respondents who filled out the questionnaire from this study. The characteristics that will be seen are gender, age, last education, income, domicile, and frequency of using YouTube in a day.

Table 1. Respondent's profile

Description	Freq.	%	Description	Freq.	%
<i>Gender</i>			<i>Occupation</i>		
Male	206	51.50%	Civil Servants	18	4.50%
Female	194	48.50%	Private employees	100	25.00%
<i>Age</i>			Student/college student	235	58.75%
15-20	87	21.75%	self-employed	32	8.00%
21-25	264	66.00%	Businessman	3	0.75%
26-30	34	8.50%	Other	12	3.00%
31-35	7	1.75%	<i>Monthly Income</i>		
>35	8	2.00%	< IDR 500.000	129	32.25%
<i>Last education</i>			> IDR 4.500.000	49	12.25%
Diploma 3	52	13.00%	IDR 2.000.000 - 3.499.999	70	17.50%
Diploma 4/Bachelor	68	17.00%	IDR 3.500.000 - 4.499.999	51	12.75%
Magister	2	0.50%	IDR 500.000 - 1.999.999	101	25.25%
High School	275	68.75%	<i>Frequency of Using YouTube in a Day</i>		
Middle School	3	0.75%	< 1 hour	81	20.25%
<i>Domicile</i>			> 3 hours	64	16.00%
Bandung	333	83.25%	1 hour	79	19.75%
Jabodetabek	29	7.25%	2 hours	114	28.50%
Other	38	9.50%	3 hours	62	15.50%

Based on Table 1, it can be seen that 51.50% or as many as 206 male respondents. As much as 48.50% or 194 were filled by female respondents. There was a slight difference between men and women in filling out the research questionnaire. Furthermore, regarding the age of the respondents, there are five groups in this study. The first is 15-20 years old as many as 87 or 21.75%, ages 21-25 as many as 264 or 66%, ages 26-30 years as many as 34 or 8.5%, 31-35 years as many as seven people or 1.75%, and >35 years as many as eight people or 2%. Most respondents in this study were aged 21-25 years according to the target, namely, millennials.

The work in this research is divided into several groups. That is as many as 18 people or 4.5% filled by Civil Servants, as many as 100 people or 25% filled by Private Employees, as many as 235 people or 58.75%

filled by students, as many as 32 people or 8% filled by Entrepreneurs, as many as 3 people or 0.75% filled by Entrepreneurs and as many as 12 people or 3% filled by other jobs such as housewives have not got a job. The work in this research is dominated by students. Furthermore, regarding the last education, the respondents were divided into several groups. The first is Diploma as many as 52 people or 13%, Graduate as many as 68 people or 17%, Magister as many as 2 people or 0.50%, high school as many as 275 people or 68.75%, and the last is middle school as many as 3 people or 0.75%. The data of high school respondents in this study were the most numerous. The data on the respondents' monthly income show that for income < IDR 500.000 as many as 129 people or 32.35%, IDR 500.000-IDR 1.999.999 as many as 101 people or

25.25%, IDR 2.000.000-IDR 3.499.999 as many as 70 people or 17.50%, IDR 3.500 .000-IDR 4.499.999 as many as 51 people or 12.75% and >4.500.000 as many as 49 people or 12.255%. This research is dominated by an income of < IDR 500.000 as many as 129 people or 32.35%.

The domicile origin of this study was dominated by Bandung people as many as 333 people or 83.25%, for Jabodetabek as many as 29 people or 7.25%, and domiciles outside Bandung and Jabodetabek as many as 38 people or 9.50%. Next is the number of respondents who watch YouTube in a week, namely <1 hour as many as 81 people or 20.25%, 1 hour as many as 79 people or 19.75%, 2 h as many as 114 people or 28.50%, 3 h as many as 62 people or 15.50%, and >3 h as many as 64 people or 16%. The highest frequency to watch YouTube in a week is 2 h, as many as 114 people or 28.50%.

4.2. Convergent Validity Test

In analyzing convergent validity, it can be seen through outer loading, Cronbach's Alpha (CA), AVE, and Composite Reliability (CR) values. Table 2 shows the loading of the item measurement model, CR, and AVE. The validity value will be accepted if each coefficient value is greater than the predetermined value of 0.5 (Alarcón et al., 2015). Then the reliability can be seen if the results in the CR column must exceed the predetermined value of 0.7 (Alarcón et al., 2015). From Table 2, it can be concluded that all AVE and extreme loading values are > 0.5, and the composite reliability value and Cronbach's alpha are >0.7. For the outer loading variable in this study, it was > 0.5 and for CR and CA it was > 0.7, the variables in this study could be said to be valid and reliable. From the results above, it can be concluded that if all indicators are declared reliable and valid. The next step is to conduct an in-depth analysis of consumer perceptions of Influencers in the review of MSMEs (Dimsanss) during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Table 2. Convergent validity test

Variable	Outer loading	CA	AVE	CR
<i>Attractiveness</i>		0.714	0.534	0.819
Have a strong attraction	0.732			
Have a beautiful and handsome face	0.649			
Interesting to see	0.836			
Very stylish	0.692			
<i>Trustworthiness</i>		0.845	0.683	0.896
Be honest in reviewing products	0.810			
The food reviewed is really good	0.838			
Can be trusted	0.860			
Reliable	0.795			
<i>Expertise</i>		0.846	0.684	0.875
Experts in the field	0.821			
Mastering every food reviewed	0.829			
Have an experience	0.823			
Have good knowledge	0.834			
<i>Para-Social Interaction</i>		0.809	0.636	0.875
Looking forward to the video on YouTube	0.786			
Make comfortable like friends	0.776			
Comment on the post	0.799			
Feel like a part of the group	0.829			
<i>Purchase Intention</i>		0.86	0.704	0.905
Will buy the promoted product	0.841			
Interested to buy	0.876			
Will buy the product if there is a chance	0.795			
Recommend reviewed products	0.842			

4.3. Discriminant Validity Test

Furthermore, the discriminant validity test was carried out using the Heteroit-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) method (see Table 3). The minimum limit of HTMT was below 0.90 (Hanseller, 2015). Additionally, the assessment of discriminant validity can be tested using the Monotrait Ratio of Correlations with criteria less than 0.9. Based on these criteria, this study meets the requirements of the correlation because the results of all variables are valid.

Table 3. HTMT

	Attractiveness	Expertise	Para-social Interaction	Purchase Intention	Trustworthiness
Attractiveness	0.731				
Expertise	0.534	0.827			
Para-social Interaction	0.514	0.48	0.798		
Purchase Intention	0.543	0.585	0.633	0.839	
Trustworthiness	0.511	0.656	0.588	0.654	0.826

4.4. Structural Model

This discussion will display a table containing AVE, R2, and Q2 and display the calculation of GoF. Table 4 shows the AVE value of each of the research variables. The first is the Attractiveness variable with an AVE value of 0.534. The Expertise variable with an AVE value of 0.684, the Para-social Interaction variable 0.636, the Purchase intention variable with an AVE value of 0.704, and the last is the Trustworthiness

variable with an AVE value 0.683. The conclusion is that if each AVE value of each variable is > 0.5.

When get the AVE value of each variable, the next step is to calculate the GoF value. From this study, the GoF value obtained was 0.600. Furthermore, it can be concluded if the GoF value obtained is included in the high category research. This means that the model in the study can be said to have high quality (Shaw, 2006).

Table 4. Structural model

Variable	AVE	R2	Q ²
Attractiveness	0.534		
Expertise	0.684		
Para-social Interaction	0.636		
Purchase Intention	0.704	0.557	0.371
Trustworthiness	0.683		
Average	0.648	0.557	
Average AVE x R2		0.360	
GoF		0.600	

4.5. Hypothesis Model

It is essential to test the hypothesis whether the variable being tested affects it or not. Table 5 shows that the first variable, namely, attractiveness, has a coefficient value of 0.149 and a p-value of 0.005. Then, H1 can be accepted, which means that Attractiveness has a significant and positive influence between Attractiveness and Purchase Intention in this study. Next is the Trustworthiness variable on Purchase Intention. This variable has a coefficient value of 0.286

and a p-value of 0.000. This means that this variable is accepted or said to be H2 or Trustworthiness is received and has a significant or positive influence on purchase intention. Next are the Expertise and Purchase Intention variables. This variable has a coefficient value of 0.171 and a p-value of 0.003. The coefficient value and p-value < 0.5 can be accepted or have a significant and positive influence on purchase intention. Therefore, H3 is received and has a substantial and positive effect on buying stakes. The last is the Para-social Interaction variable with Purchase Intention. This variable has a coefficient value of 0.306 and a p-value of 0.000. If H4 is accepted or para-social, int has a significant and positive influence on purchase intention. Therefore, it can be concluded that all hypotheses built in this study are accepted, and all independent variables in this study have a significant and positive influence on people’s purchase intention during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Table 1. Hypotheses test

Path	Coef.	T-value	p-value	Test result
H1 Attractiveness - Purchase Intention	0.149	2.833	0.005	Support
H2 Trustworthiness - Purchase Intention	0.286	5.331	0.000	Support
H3 Expertise - Purchase Intention	0.171	2.986	0.003	Support
H4 Para-social Interaction - Purchase Intention	0.306	5.431	0.000	Support

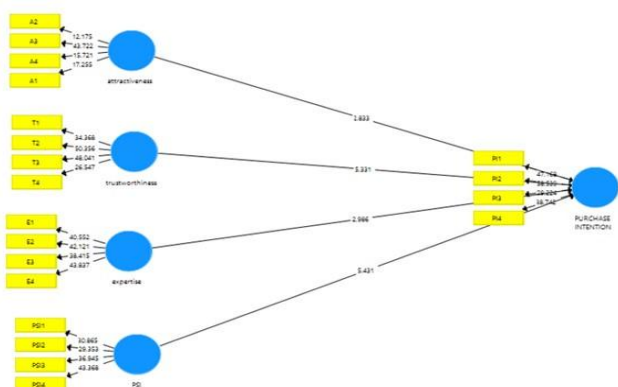


Figure 2. Bootstrapping

4.6. Multi-Group Analysis

The purpose of doing a Multi-Group Analysis is to see if there are differences in the perspective of men and women toward Influencers with the variables, such as attractiveness, trustworthiness, expertise, and para-social interaction.

Table 2. Multi-group analysis

	B	p-Value (Male vs. Female)
H5 Attractiveness -> Purchase Intention	0.093	0.169
H6 Expertise -> Purchase Intention	0.334	0.999
H7 Para-social Interaction -> Purchase Intention	0.037	0.358
H8 Trustworthiness -> Purchase Intention	0.190	0.036

Based on Table 6, variable attractiveness and para-

social interaction are insignificant for men and women with values of 0.169 and 0.358, which means that H5 and H7 are rejected, or there is no difference between male and female perspectives on attractiveness and para-social interaction influencers, especially. While the expertise and trustworthiness variables were declared significant with values of 0.999 and 0.036 or in other words, differences in the perspective of men and women toward expertise and trustworthiness influencers or in other words, H6 and H8 were accepted as significantly positive for purchase intention.

4.7. Discussions and Implication

The attractiveness variable has a p-value of 0.005 or < 0.5. These results show that the attractiveness of an Influencer influences purchase intention. In this study, the Attractiveness of influencers, such as appearance, agrees with previous research that attractiveness positively impacts purchase intention (Arora et al., 2019; Weismueller et al., 2020). Likewise, this research shows that the appearance of an influencer is considered in influencing them to stimulate the purchase intention. Therefore, an Influencer can increase the Attractiveness of their appearance by following the current trend.

Furthermore, the Trustworthiness variable has a p-value of 0.000 or < 0.5. These results show that the honesty of an influencer is very much considered and considered when watching the video review. Because the reason respondents tend to video reviews is considered before buying or trying the food product. Therefore, honesty when reviewing food is essential. This agrees with previous research if the higher the Trust of the Influencer, the higher the intention to buy

(Muslichah et al., 2019). Therefore, the trustworthiness variable needs to be maintained and developed so that viewers can trust when watching the video review because it affects their purchase intention. Thus, an influencer in increasing and influencing his followers should review the food honestly, not exaggerate, and include suggestions for his food. Besides being honest, it helps to improve the quality of the food.

Then, the expertise variable has a value of 0.003 or <0.5 , meaning that the expertise variable influences purchase intention. An influencer's Expertise in reviewing food is essential. The sensitivity of an influencer's tongue is also essential when reviewing food. Therefore, influencers can check the food in detail, this agrees with previous research, which said that expertise affected purchase intention (Huang & Copeland, 2020; Ifeanyichukwu, 2016). Therefore, an influencer must be an expert and experienced in reviewing food to affect purchase intention. Efforts that an influencer can make in increasing the ability of these skills can be by mastering knowledge about the food so that when the review occurs, it is expert and experienced, increasing the sensitivity of the tongue so that it can determine what components are in the food.

Next is the Para-social Interaction variable. This variable has a p-value of 0.000. This shows that Para-social Interaction affects purchase intention. The interaction of an influencer in terms of review is essential. When the Influencer gets closer and often interacts with the audience, the effort to influence and invite them to try their food is even higher. This research agrees with previous research, namely, Para-social Interaction, or the way influencers communicate with their followers, which positively impacts purchase intention (Ferebee, 2008; Zheng et al., 2020). However, to increase this interaction, Influencers can be more active by interacting with their followers, such as responding to their YouTube comments, or when reviewing involves two-way communication such as asking for opinions or suggestions for future videos. Because the higher the interaction, the followers will be more influenced to buy interest. Finally, the Purchase Intention variable has a value of 3.83, which means that the purchase intention in food reviewed by an influencer is still high. This shows that influencers play a role in influencing the purchase intention (Yuan & Lou, 2020). To improve this, we need the right influencer.

Next about the moderating variable. First, attractiveness of gender moderate to purchase intention, which has a value of 0.169, which means that it is proven not to be significant or there is no difference between the perspectives of men and women in seeing the Attractiveness of influencers. This study shows that both male and female influencers strongly attract viewers or followers to view their video reviews. This agrees with previous research if men and women see the Attractiveness of influencers with the same perspective and no difference (Abbas et al., 2018). Therefore, when Dimsanss chooses influencers who

will review their products, both men and women will equally influence purchase intention, as explained if, in this study, Attractiveness has a significant effect on purchase intention.

Then, gender moderates the trustworthiness and purchase intention variables. the result is 0.999, which means that there are differences in the perspective of men and women on the honesty of an influencer in influencing purchase intention. In this study, men viewed that the truthfulness of influencers in reviewing food was higher than women. This is because men feel that influencers in reviewing are more honest and trustworthy than women. This is also in line with previous research that the perspective of men and women on Trustworthiness has a significant influence in influencing purchase intention (Samarasinghe, 2018). Therefore, to choose the right Influencer to review Dimsanss, it must be an Influencer who has an honest character in reviewing. You can select an Influencer who, when studying, gives input to improve the quality of food or, in other words, choose an Influencer who, when reviewing, does not always say it is delicious throughout the video. But who can give an honest review about the advantages and disadvantages of the food?

Then, gender moderates the expertise and Purchase Intention variable, which has a value of 0.999, which means that there is a significant difference between the perspectives of men and women regarding the Expertise of an influencer. This happens because men prefer Influencers who, when reviewing food, are interspersed with entertainment. Simultaneously, women like it if Influencers have to be experts in reviewing food in detail and informatively. This agrees with previous research if men and women have different perspectives on the Expertise of an influencer in influencing purchase intention (Samarasinghe H., 2018); Samarasinghe, 2018). The thing that Dimsanss must do to choose is to choose Influencers who have Expertise in reviewing food in detail, informative, besides influencers who have entertaining characters so that viewers feel entertained when watching food review videos.

Finally, gender moderates Para-social Interaction with Purchase Intention having a value of 0.036. this shows no difference between the way men and women look when interacting during the video review. Men and women view para-social interaction as the same thing when they wait for an influencer video. They both look forward to the video review as entertainment, a reference. This agrees with previous research showing gender-based differences in para-social interaction (Wasike, 2018). Therefore, Dimsanss can choose Influencers who often post their video reviews on YouTube. Because the more often the Influencer posts his video review, the higher the engagement with the audience will be.

5. Conclusion

In this study, it is proven that source credibility

(attractiveness, trustworthiness, and expertise) and para-social interaction have an influence on purchase intention, or it can be said that Influencers impact stimulating the audience toward purchase interest. Additionally, the formulation of the problem determined can be answered, and the objectives of this research can be achieved. The first problem is whether source credibility (attractiveness, trustworthiness, and expertise) and para-social interaction influence purchase intention. The result is that the variables in this study have a significant effect on buying stakes. The second problem is whether there is a difference in perspective between men and women toward Influencers. The answer is that there are significant differences in the trustworthiness and expertise variables. However, there is no difference in the perspective of men and women on Attractiveness and para-social interaction.

Furthermore, regarding choosing the right Influencer during the Covid-19 Pandemic, it is to choose the characteristics of influencers who have a strong appeal or attractive personality, have honesty in reviewing their food, are not made up, have experience, Expertise in reviewing, and have sensitivity. Who has high regard for food, besides those who have good social interactions with the audience and have many subscribers.

5.1. Managerial Implications

Based on these conclusions, the authors make several inputs that MSMEs can make, especially Dimsanss, in maintaining their business during the COVID-19 Pandemic. The suggestions are: when Dimsanss wants to do a promotion, they can use the influencer or food vlogger as an option. Additionally, Dimsanss will get several benefits by using Influencers, such as being able to help increase sales at a more efficient cost. Video reviews can always be shown on their channel, and when viewers search for the keyword dim sum, the Dimsanss review video will also appear. However, Dimsanss must choose the right Influencers to be more effective. Such as paying attention to indicators owned by Influencers or Food Vloggers such as having a strong appeal or attractive personality, reviewing food honestly and not excessively, having experience and Expertise in reviewing food, and having good social interactions with the audience or followers.

5.2. Limitations

In this study, the authors examine whether the use of influencers during the COVID-19 Pandemic affects the purchase intention in MSMEs by using source credibility variables (Attractiveness, Trustworthiness, and Expertise) and para-social interaction moderated by gender. Therefore, the author only focuses on variables and SMEs. Subsequent research can be done with the same method but with the addition of different variables and objects.

Authors' Contributions

This research is a joint work activity contract. Moh Farid Najib with Elsanty Mega Lestari was conducted a preliminary study to find industrial problems and was responsible for conducting literature reviews and designing research. We state that there are no ghost writers, all of whom have contributed to research and publications.

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