## ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the influence of TikTok food influencer credibility—consisting of trustworthiness, attractiveness, and expertise—on consumers' purchase intention, with brand image serving as a mediating variable. The study is conducted in the context of food and beverage micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in Central Java, considering the increasingly strategic role of TikTok as a social media platform in shaping consumer perceptions and stimulating purchase intentions through influencer-generated content.

This research adopts a quantitative approach using a survey method. Data were collected from 191 respondents who are active TikTok users and have been exposed to food promotion content from food influencers. Data analysis was carried out using Partial Least Squares–Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) to examine the relationships among variables and to test the mediating role of brand image within the research model.

The results indicate that food influencer attractiveness and expertise have a positive and significant effect on purchase intention, while trustworthiness does not have a significant direct effect. However, all three dimensions of influencer credibility are found to have a positive and significant impact on brand image. Furthermore, brand image has a positive and significant effect on purchase intention and functions as a mediating variable in the relationship between influencer credibility and consumers' purchase intention. These findings highlight the crucial role of brand image in influencer-based digital marketing on TikTok.

**Keywords:** *Trustworthiness, Attractiveness, Expertise, Brand Image, Purchase Intention, TikTok, Food Influencer, PLS-SEM.*

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