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File name: The\_Role\_of\_Celebgram\_Trustworthiness.pdf  
File size: 284.58K  
Page count: 22  
Word count: 6,976  
Character count: 40,376  
Submission date: 30-May-2021 10:39PM (UTC+0700)  
Submission ID: 1597138245

**#I ENVY, THEREFORE, I BUY! #: THE ROLE OF  
CELEBGRAM TRUSTWORTHINESS AND PARASOCIAL  
INTERACTIONS IN CONSUMER PURCHASE INTENTION**

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Businessmen's marketing strategies that take advantage of the fame of celebgrams as influencers are incredibly appropriate in the social media era. The present study deals with the dynamics of celebgram trustworthiness and social interaction with their followers in relation to possession envy and consumer purchase intention. To test the proposed model, the researchers collected data from 181 respondents in Indonesia through an online survey and analyzed it using the Smart PLS. The results of the present study showed that celebgram trustworthiness had no positive effect on possession envy but it had a positive effect on consumer purchase intention. Furthermore, parasocial interactions had a positive effect on possession envy and consumer purchase intention and possession envy had a positive effect on consumer purchase intention. The present study provides a theoretical contribution to the literature on retail and consumer services and offers managerial implications for instafamous-based marketing.

**Keywords:** Celebgram trustworthiness, parasocial interactions, possession envy and purchase intention.

**Introduction**

Numerous well-known clothing brands in Indonesia take advantage of the fame of celebgrams as influencers to promote their products to consumers. For example, the clothing brand Riotous Bell that partners with such Instagram influencers as @kasmaranindonesia can reach more than five million viewers (Pratnyawan & Prisiilia, 2018). The presence of Instagram is capable of giving birth to millions of new fashionistas who not only collaborate in terms of brands but also potentially launch their own product lines (Arora, Bansal, Kandpal, Aswani, & Dwivedi, 2019; Adler, 2016). According to Indvik (2016), the top fashion bloggers play an important role as influencers via Instagram since they have millions of followers and actively engage with consumers on a regular basis, and serve to create deep brand awareness ultimately influencing purchasing decisions (Loureiro de Plaza,

# The Role of Celebgram Trustworthiness

*by* Purwanto Purwanto

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## Abstract

Businessmen's marketing strategies that take advantage of the fame of celebgrams as influencers are incredibly appropriate in the social media era. The present study deals with the dynamics of celebgram trustworthiness and social interaction with their followers in relation to possession envy and consumer purchase intention. To test the proposed model, the researchers collected data from 181 respondents in Indonesia through an online survey and analyzed it using the Smart PLS. The results of the present study showed that celebgram trustworthiness had no positive effect on possession envy but it had a positive effect on consumer purchase intention. Furthermore, parasocial interactions had a positive effect on possession envy and consumer purchase intention and possession envy had a positive effect on consumer purchase intention. The present study provides a theoretical contribution to the literature on retail and consumer services and offers managerial implications for instafamous-based marketing.

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## Introduction

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& Taghian, 2017). This is proven by the Report for Influencer Marketing in Asia (anymindgrup.com, 2020) that throughout March 2020 more than 98 million posts on Instagram as user-generated content (UGC) with the hashtag #Fashionista were capable of increasing sales more of 42%.

The fame of celebgrams and UGC creates a new format for marketing strategies under the name of influencers who collaborate with brands to promote their products (De Veirman, Cauberghe, & Hudders, 2017). Therefore, business people and brands are increasingly interested in taking advantage of famous figures born from UGC with credibility as brand ambassadors on social media, despite the fact that they are not famous actresses and actors or athletes. According to Gallagher, Watt, Weaver, & Murphy (2017), investment for promotion via social media may reach US\$ 10 billion in 2022 with 38% growth per year specifically in fashion, beauty and tourism, while research related to the credible influencer marketing believed\* to influence consumers remains scarce (De Veirman et al., 2017; Jin & Ryu, 2020; Sokolova & Kefi 2020). Using influencer services should also consider its credibility in order to be trusted by consumers. Thus, influencers should have more insight into their daily attitudes and behaviors when working with brands in order to motivate their followers (Sokolova & Kefi 2020).

Previous literature has focused a lot on celebrities well-known on TV and mainstream media (Ford, 2018). However, well-known celebrities can only be used by large companies and well-known brands that can afford to pay high prices on a national and even international scale (Abidin, 2016). Meanwhile, many celebrities are currently viral due to their creative contents, have many followers and are relatively inexpensive, leading many marketers to eye them (De Veirman et al., 2017) to promote their products and brands. This is considered more potential and unconventional than advertisements (de Vries, Gensler, & Leeflang, 2012), despite the fact that the quality of the contents look less professional and tend to contain promotions only (Hautz, Füller, Hutter, & Thürridl, 2014; Müller, Mattke, & Maier, 2018). The purpose of the present study was to analyze the effect of celebgram trustworthiness as content creators and parasocial interactions on the emotion of possession envy and purchase intention. Despite the great effect of the presence of celebgrams on purchasing decisions, there are scant studies on the success factors of

Instagram celebrity-based marketing, such as celebgram trustworthiness and social interactions (Jin & Ryu, 2020). Celebgram trustworthiness depends on authority, reliability and social attractiveness (Kelman, 1958; Rogers & Bhowmik, 1970). Many marketers merely take advantage of celebgrams who tend to feature authority and attractiveness due to the creativity of the content displayed (Sokolova & Kefi, 2020; De Veirman *et al.*, 2017; Jin & Ryu, 2020). Meanwhile, interactivity in e-commerce is the best way to build relationships with customers through a two-way relationship between buyers and sellers (Yoo, Lee, & Park, 2010). Celebgrams' social interactions on social media have not been fully studied in the literature of Instagram-based marketing capable of arousing consumer emotions in increasing purchase intention. Previous literature argues that trustworthiness is related to honesty, whereas a good intention reflects caring (Petty & Wegener, 1998). Thus, utilizing celebgram fame and awareness capable of building social attitudes through interactions with followers can fill empirical gaps and provide practical insights on effective instafamous-based marketing strategies on social media.

The rise of promotions via the Instagram makes consumers happy to follow and form social interactions (PSI) with celebgrams by making illusory face-to-face meeting via social media. Therefore, what the celebgrams do and use through showcases on the Instagram arouses envy. In the end, consumers decide to buy the products and brands they use (Milovic, 2014). Consumers are envious to have it, as a dimension of materialism (Belk, 1984), which is generated by celebgrams through the products or brands they use (Belk, 2008; McFerran, Aquino, & Tracy, 2014). Especially with the presence of social media, many celebgrams often show off their glamorous lifestyle, encouraging many followers to make social comparisons and leading to materialistic jealousy and compulsive obsessiveness (Chae, 2018; Jin, Ryu, & Muqaddam, 2018). The new way of interaction between brands and consumers on social media constitutes a challenge for marketers to use social media strategically and create consumer-attracting contents which are in turn capable of creating customer value (Schulze, Scholer, & Skiera, 2015).

Consumer interactions in marketing via social media occur when there are responses to contents created by celebgrams and encourage brand or product awareness which in turn influences consumer purchasing decisions (Ashley & Tuten,

2015; Kim & Johnson, 2016). This phenomenon makes interaction in social media a central role of e-WOM and as a medium for brand communication (Muller & Christandl, 2019; Roma & Aloini, 2019). Thus, celebgrams' social interactions provide a theoretical and practical basis for brand interactions, celebgram trustworthiness, and brand trustworthiness in increasing consumer purchase intention.

The final section will discuss the literature and research hypotheses, explain the research methodology, present the results empirically, and discuss the results, describe the conclusions, theoretical and practical implications, as well as the limitations and direction of future research.

## **Literature Review and Hypothesis Development**

### *Effects of celebgram trustworthiness*

The presence of celebgrams and the way they influence their followers depend on authority, credibility and social attractiveness (Kelman, 1958). Authority is related to the position of a celebgram within a social structure who is believed to be a public figure. A celebgram has an authority to mobilize their followers in activities that are beneficial both personally and in groups (Kelman, 1958; Sokolova & Kefi, 2020). Credibility describes how reliable and dependable a celebgram's content source is (Rogers & Bhowmik, 1970). A celebgram's credibility is shown by the quality of their communication with the audience. The credibility of communication affects the audience through daily behavior by means of the contents created (Kelman, 1958). The main factor of credibility is knowledge, experience, trustworthiness and goodwill possessed by the source (McCroskey & Teven, 1999; Sokolova & Kefi, 2020). Trustworthiness is related to honesty, whereas a good intention reflects caring for followers. In general, celebgrams can be considered trustworthy, must be attractive, and are considered experts, so that they are capable of influencing their follower attitudes and behavior which in turn affect purchase intention (Petty & Wegener, 1998; Gunawan & Huarng, 2015). Social attractiveness derives from a figure's capability to change their followers through communication (Sharma, 1990). Perceived social attractiveness can be cues for decision making (Chaikan, 1979). According to Kelman (1958), members of the audience will follow their idolized figures in order to be similar or resemblant. Millennials are considered social media

users who are vulnerable to being influenced by fashion developments led by celebgrams.

Previous literature argues that celebgrams' lifestyle and personality constitute the mecca for fashion development (Peter, 2004; Boon, 2001). The social cognitive theory shows that people are more easily influenced by figures considered similar to them (Bandura, 1994). For example, millennials are more likely to buy products endorsed by someone who matches their self-image (Sokolova & Kefi, 2019; Sukhdial, Aiken, & Kahle, 2002). In terms of social structure, celebgrams have a direct effect on their followers (Jin & Ryu, 2020; Gass, 2015). Furthermore, an influencer can be considered to have a higher social status, despite their inability to directly reward or punish followers who have or have not bought the products they endorse (Sokolova & Kefi, 2020). However, what is worn by celebgrams can trigger envy in followers (Belk, 2008). Furthermore, envy constitutes a dimension of materialism (Belk, 2008; McFerran *et al.*, 2014) generated when celebgrams wear certain products and brands.

Such influencers as Febby Rastanti (@febbyrastanti) and Andra Alodita (@alodita) post various types of photos, both selfies and groups, with glamorous and attractive brands to promote certain brands. Glamorous photos of celebgrams posted on the Instagram tend to be more powerful in triggering follower envy (Jin & Muqaddam, 2018; Jin *et al.*, 2018). Furthermore, Jin *et al.* (2018) and Jin and Ryu (2020) state that celebgram trustworthiness as seen in Instagram photos is stronger narcissistically in generating consumer jealousy or envy and capable of leading to envy which in turn increases purchase intention (Lin, 2018).

Previous studies have suggested that the type of contents and tone of voice can increase perceived trust in celebgrams and brands. A loud and clear voice makes followers understand the content of the conversation (Beukeboom, Kerkhof & de Vries, 2015; Kelleher, 2009) and can influence perceived trustworthiness and purchase intention on social media (Barcelos, Dantas & Senecal, 2018), consequently increasing brand evaluation (Beukeboom *et al.*, 2015), including brand trust, brand satisfaction, and brand commitment (Kelleher & Miller, 2006). A celebgram as a brand identity serves to sell products through follower endorse and the celebgram's personality touch and encourages consumer consumption through various

communities (Centeno & Wang, 2017; Holmes & Redmond, 2014). Previous literature also states that celebgrams are considered more believed to evoke envy and PSI which are stronger than mainstream media celebrities (Jin, Muqaddam, & Ryu, 2019).

*H1:* Celebgram trustworthiness has a positive effect on envy to purchase the brands and products worn.

*H3:* Celebgram trustworthiness has a positive effect on consumer purchase intention.

#### *Effects of Parasocial Interactions*

Parasocial interaction (PSI) theory is defined as a form of relationship between actors and followers (Horton & Wohl, 1956) which describes interpersonal intimacy as if it were real (Dibble, Hartmann, Rosaen, 1995). Relationships are built naturally, and the parties are unaware that this relationship affects each other (Kelman, 1958). Previous literature suggested that women have parasocial interactions to express their desire to resemble the celebrity they idolize (Sokolova & Kefi, 2020; Greenwood, Pietromonaco & Long, 2008). In some ways, this can be similar to a celebgram in terms of the relationship between social media users and influencers. For example, celebgrams using social media make posts related to the products and brands they wear so that they can influence their followers' emotions such as envy to possess what they wear (Jin & Ryu, 2020; McFerran *et al.*, 2014).

Previous empirical studies suggest that followers form a community and share values, beliefs, and interests (Nambisan & Watt, 2011). Therefore, the two-way relationship between the community and the celebgram seems to be real, even though it is only an illusion that occurs in cyberspace (Labrecque, 2014; Lee & Watkins, 2016). Kim, Ko, and Kim, (2015) found that the use of social networks is positively related to parasocial interactions. For example, young women participate in all celebgram activities starting from their habits, lifestyle, to the fashion they wear, which may arouse envy (Djafarova & Rushworth, 2017). Lee & Watkins (2016) argued that social interactions between celebgrams and followers have a positive effect on the emotion of possession envy to buy luxury brands and aspire similarities to the celebgrams on social media. Other literature also states that PSI is positively related to purchase intention because of followers' envy and self-esteem (Hwang &



Zhang, 2018; Chung & Cho, 2017). Women show a more intimate PSI and express a stronger desire to imitate their idols (Greenwood *et al.*, 2008; Sokolova & Kefi, 2020). The envious attitude to imitate their idols is a social comparison behavior with the aim of having conformity to social standards (Wiedemann, Hennigs, & Siebels, 2009).

Social comparison theory plays an important role in the materialism of values and compulsive buying (Islam, Sheikh, Hameed, & Azam, 2018). Compulsive buying is repetitive purchase due to emotional factors (one of them being envy) and hedonic factors and luxury brands (Ridgway, Kukar-Kinney, & Monroe, 2008; Horvath & Adiguzel, 2018). Hedonic values are crucial to describe the luxury of a brand in consumption that provides satisfaction and sensory enjoyment through experiences with luxury products (Purwanto & Kuswandi, 2017). The luxury brands worn by celebgrams are longer and elastic in delivering the promise of pleasure and emotional effects (Hagtvedt & Patrick, 2009). The celebgrams' aesthetical posts of luxury brands in the form of photos on the Instagram platform evoke consumers' hedonistic sensation and emotional appeal (possession envy) (Ajitha & Sivakumar, 2017; Sokolova & Kefi, 2020).

H2: Social interactions have a positive effect on possession envy of wearing brands worn by their idols.

H4: Parasocial interactions have a positive effect on consumer purchase intention.

### *Possession envy*

Possession envy as a dimension of materialism is evoked by an individual's possession of a product or brand (Belk, 1984; Belk, 2008; McFerran *et al.*, 2014). Celebgrams' posts of photos, both selfies and groups, can narcissistically depict sociability and popularity (Jin & Muqaddam, 2018). Moreover, the posts of photos of wearing branded clothes seem glamorous and cause a stronger possession envy (Jin *et al.*, 2018). Furthermore, Jin & Ryu (2020) stated that the types of celebgrams' post create consumer envy which in turn increase purchase intention. Previous literature also argued that PSI with celebrities through social media increases envy (Chung & Cho, 2017).

Theoretically, envy has a positive relationship with consumer purchase intention and tends to compete evolutionarily either intraexually or intersexually

(Buunk & Massar, 2012).<sup>1</sup> In the context of celebgram influencer-based marketing, narcissistic and glamorous photos can evoke envy and in turn increase consumer purchase intention (Lin, 2018; Milovic, 2014). Based on these theoretical and empirical reasons,<sup>21</sup> we propose the following hypothesis:

H5: Possession envy has a positive effect on consumer purchase intention.

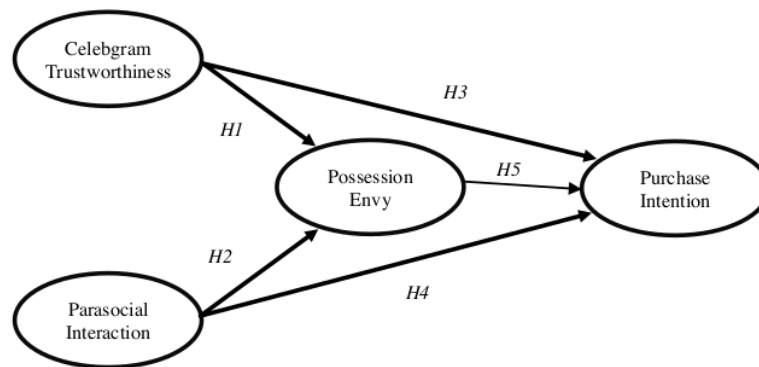


Figure 1. Proposed Model

## Research methods

### <sup>12</sup> Sample and data collection

The sample of the present study consisted of 181 Instagram user respondents who were monitored via the researchers' Instagram links who had stated that they were followers of their idolized celebgrams. Data were collected from 300 respondents using the Instagram links. Valid respondents were marked as those who have transacted online due to the celebgram factor as a shopping experience during the last three months in the data collection process. The researchers sent questionnaires to 30 students who had friends with at least 10 Instagram accounts and provided informed consent with regard to the purpose of conducting interviews or distributing questionnaires.<sup>2</sup> This technique is useful when respondents are difficult to identify and contact, while surveys need to be performed immediately (Copper & Schindler, 2013).

<sup>45</sup> The researchers monitored the progress of the survey daily using Instagram walls, tags and messengers. Of the 300 questionnaires distributed, 181 responses were

considered valid (response rate of 60.33%). The researchers assessed respondents' responses by comparing initial and final responses by means of *t*-test among the study constructs, the results of which showed no difference (ranging from 1.07 to 0.254,  $p > .05$ ). The chi-square test for celebgram trustworthiness ( $\chi^2 = 16,817, p = .53$ ), social interaction ( $\chi^2 = 1,874, p = 0.75$ ), possession envy ( $\chi^2 = 11,884, p = .28$ ), and purchase intention ( $\chi^2 = 17.656, p = 0.16$ ) indicates no difference at the 95% significance level. Thus, the common method variant (CMV) bias is not a problem in this respect. The respondents (99 females and 82 males) had a mean age of 30.1 years (ranging from 18 to 64 representing generations Y, Z and X,  $SD = 6.75$ ). Finally, 38.12% of consumers had undergraduate/diploma education, 16.02% had a master's degree, 3.86% had a doctorate degree, and 6.07% had senior secondary education. The detailed characteristics of the respondents are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Sample characteristics (N = 181)

	Frequency	Percent	Mean	Standard Deviation
<b>Age</b>			30.1	5.47
<b>Gender</b>				
Male	82	45.3		
Female	99	54.6		
<b>Education</b>				
High school or lower	11	6.07		
Vocational/technology	20	20.99		
Some college	27	14.91		
Bachelor's degree	69	38.12		
Master's degree	29	16.02		
Doctoral Degree	7	3.86		
<b>Experience</b>				
1 month	117	64.64		
>3 month	64	35.35		

#### *Instrument*

The present study used a questionnaire designed online with Google Form for data collection. The survey was tested to 20 respondents online to detect possible flaws in the design and the instrument. This was important to avoid negative consequences for survey activities such as ambiguity, confusion, and offensive questions (Cooper & Schindler, 2013). Based on consumer comments and suggestions, the researchers improved several items and entered the Google Form again. Responses were recorded using a Likert scale of 1 for strongly disagree to 7 for strongly agree.

### Measurement

Based on several previous studies, we developed 13 statement instruments (Table 2). First, the measurement of celebgram trustworthiness consisted of 4 items adopted from Beukeboom *et al.* (2015), (Ford, 2018), and Sokolova & Kefi (2020) with a Likert scale of 1 for strongly disagree to 7 for strongly agree. Second, parasocial interaction consisted of 4 items adopted from Jin & Ryu (2020), Ajitha & Sivakumar (2017), and McFerran *et al.* (2014) with a Likert scale of 1 for strongly disagree to 7 for strongly agree. Third, possession envy consisted of 3 items adopted from Sokolova & Kefi (2019), Horvath & Adiguzel (2018), and Greenwood *et al.*, 2008) with a Likert scale of 1 for strongly disagrees to 7 for strongly agrees. Finally, purchase intention consisted of 2 items adopted from Centeno & Wang (2017) and Holmes & Redmond (2014) with a Likert scale of 1 for strongly disagree to 7 for strongly agree.

Table 2. Survey instruments, factor loadings, CRs and AVEs

Variables	Item	Loading/ weight
Celebgram Trustworthiness (Beukeboom <i>et al.</i> (2015); Ford (2018); Sokolova & Kefi (2019)) CR: 0.82; AVE: 0.77.	This Instagram celebrity's personality makes me feel comfortable.	.81
	When I see the celebgram I am sure she has a good credibility.	.82
	The contents created by this celebgram are very interesting to me.	.79
	The photos posted by this celebgram are very interesting for me.	.75
Parasocial Interaction (Sokolova & Kefi, (2019); Horvath & Adiguzel (2018); Greenwood <i>et al.</i> (2008)). CR: 0.81; AVE: 0.87.	I feel as if I have a real connection with celebgram influencers.	.73
	I can build personal relationships with this Instagram celebrity.	.73
	This celebgram is like a friend of mine.	.71
	This celebgram gives a fast response to answer her followers' questions.	.75
Possession Envy (Sokolova & Kefi (2019); Horvath & Adiguzel (2018); Greenwood <i>et al.</i> (2008)) CR: 0.75; AVE: 0.81.	What the celebgram influencers wear makes envy me to possess it.	.72
	I get annoyed when I see people being able to buy whatever they want of the brands worn by celebgrams.	.74
	I get annoyed when celebgrams have that stuff I can't afford it.	.68
Purchase Intention (Centeno & Wang (2017); Holmes & Redmond (2014)). CR: 0.81; AVE: 0.76.	Celebgram trustworthiness as an influencer and parasocial interaction evoke my envy to buy the brands they wear.	.75
	I am interested in buying clothing brands/products worn by this Instagram celebrity.	.72

### Technique of Analysis

The present study examined the proposed model by using two-stage partial least squares (PLS) which allows to analyze the causality of the relationships among latent constructs (Hair, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2011).

## Results and Discussion

### Confirmatory factor analysis

According to Anderson and Gerbing (1988), there are two stages of analysis to test a structural model: first, testing the overall fit of the hypothesized model. Based on the results of the model fit analysis, all of them are acceptable, with a goodness-of-fit-index (GFI) of 0.946, a comparative fit index (CFI) of 0.917, no standard residual of more than 2.0, and a Chi-square of 616,322 (100 *df*, *p* = 0.000), meaning that the overall fit of the model is acceptable (Hair *et al.*, 2011). Second, the test of the adequacy of each scale consisting of statement items shows a significant standard in terms of convergent validity. Subsequently, the test of the adequacy of each scale consisting of the number of statement items covering each construct is shown in Table 3.

Table 3. CFA correlation matrix (Fornell-Larcker criterion)

	Celebgram Trustworthiness	Parasocial interaction	Possession envy	Purchase intention
Celebgram trustworthiness	<b>0.813</b>			
Parasocial Interaction	0.251	<b>0.872</b>		
Possession envy	-0.031	0.113	<b>0.784</b>	
Purchase Intention	0.212	0.121	0.021	<b>0.761</b>
Age	0.047	0.123	0.112	0.132
Gender	-0.062	-0.014	-0.011	-0.011
Education	-0.046	-0.054	-0.021	-0.211
Marital status	-0.037	-0.036	0.021	-0.012
Experience	0.078	0.423	0.243	-0.721
Composite Reliability (CR)	<b>0.947</b>	<b>0.921</b>	<b>0.652</b>	<b>0.732</b>
Average Variance Extracted (AVE)	<b>0.328</b>	<b>0.477</b>	<b>0.765</b>	<b>0.124</b>
Mean	0.453	0.344	0.876	0.432
Standard Deviation (SD)	0.244	0.081	0.043	0.021

Model fit:  $\chi^2 = 2.145, p < .01, df = 1.407; CFI = 0.917; TLI = 0.904; RMSEA = 0.076; SRMR = 0.09$

<sup>a</sup>The square roots of AVE for each construct are presented in bold on the diagonal of the correlation matrix.

<sup>b</sup>AVEs of formative indicators are not applicable.

<sup>c</sup>Note. *N* = 181.

Each construct has a reliability of more than 0.76, thereby showing internal consistency. In addition, the average variance extracted (AVE) ranges from 0.76 to

0.87, indicating that the construct is larger than the variance caused by measurement error (Fornell & Larcker, 1981).

Lastly, the common method variance (CMV) was tested of the data. There are two approaches to testing CMV. First, the single factor commonly used was tested. The results showed that there was no single factor explaining the substantial portion of the total variance of the data. Subsequently, the general method factor was tested, showing that the method variance was very small relative to the substantive variance (the ratio being 57:1). The small method variance indicates that CMV was not a major problem in the data.

*Structural models and hypothesis testing*

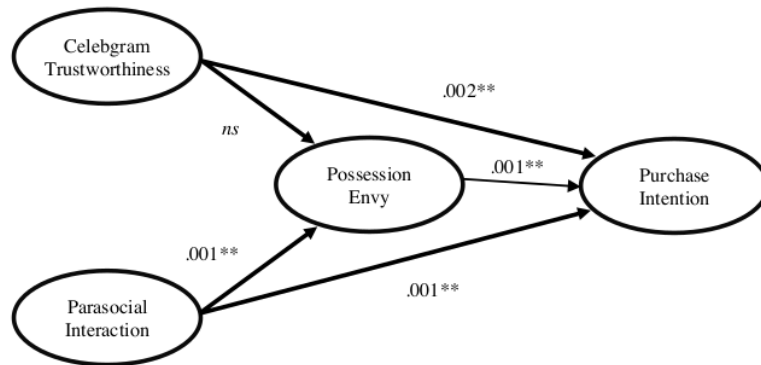
After confirming adequate data validity and reliability, the proposed research model was tested, showing that the measurement of the proposed model was in accordance with the data. Results of the analysis showed that celebgram trustworthiness had no effect on possession envy (Hypothesis 1).

Table 4. Hypothesis Testing

Structural path	Standardized estimate	t-statistic	p-values
H1 Celebgram trustworthiness – possession envy	.372	7.625	.075*
H2 Parasocial interaction – possession envy	.571	6.115	.001**
H3 Celebgram trustworthiness – purchase intention	.162	9.721	.002**
H4 Social interaction – purchase intention.	.274	11.476	.001**
H5 Possession envy – purchase intention.	.438	21.211	.001**

\*Significant at \*  $p < 0.05$  \*\*  $p < 0.01$ ; \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$ .

Results of hypothesis testing shows that there is one insignificant latent construct, so that Hypothesis 1 is not supported. The other four latent constructs have a significant effect on purchase intention. Hypotheses 2 – 5 are proven; thus, they are supported, see Figure 2. Parasocial interaction had an effect on possession envy (Hypothesis 2). Celebgram trustworthiness had an effect on purchase intention (Hypothesis 3). Possession envy had an effect on purchase intention (Hypothesis 4). Finally, possession envy had an effect on purchase intention (Hypothesis 5). Results of hypothesis testing are shown in Table 4 and Figure 2.



Note: Hypothesized paths

\* $p < .10$ , \*\* $< .01$

31  
Figure. 2. Results of the proposed model.

### Discussion

Results of the present study enrich the empirical findings regarding the effect of celebgram trustworthiness and parasocial interactions on possession envy that need to be considered in influencer marketing on social media to increase consumer purchase intention. One important finding of the study is that celebgram trustworthiness originated from authority, credibility and social attractiveness has no effect on the emotion of consumer possession envy. This is due to the fact that the followers' emotions remain in the stage of searching for information about the celebgrams, whether they can be good influencers or not (for example, whether their followers are numerous or not, whether their followers are genuine or fake, whether the contents are good or not). At this stage, consumers are exploring, so that they still have no emotional ties to evoke envy (Milovik 2014). Recalling the famous name of a celebgram does not guarantee satisfaction with a brand, even less those not well-known celebgrams (Jin & Ryu, 2020). There is one question: Can an unknown celebgram showcasing a famous brand or, vice versa, a famous celebgram showcasing an unknown brand complement each other to influence followers? It is this question that constitutes the reason that celebgram trustworthiness cannot evoke the followers' possession envy. However, celebgram trustworthiness can be an important predictor

in terms of increasing consumer purchase intention, given that celebgrams have a strong authority and social appeal to influence their followers (Chung & Cho, 2017).

Parasocial interaction plays an important role in increasing followers' emotions to possess the products and brands the celebgrams wear. Celebgrams post various photos, either selfies or taken by other people, and group photos, which show themselves wearing endorsed products in various styles, both in the photo catalog and directly on their YouTube account. When their followers are exposed to various photo poses posted by the celebgrams, the tendency to make social comparisons is higher, capable of triggering the followers' emotions to possess what their celebgrams showcase (Lin, 2018; Wiedemann *et al.*, 2009). This is because followers' envy with instafamous-based materialistic values can drive consumers to make social comparisons with their idols (Kim *et al.*, 2016; McFerran *et al.*, 2014). The results of the present study also indicate that intimate social interactions can lead to compulsive buying. The higher the envy the higher consumer purchase intention is. This positive relationship is built from various photo posts, both selfies and in groups (Ajitha & Sivakumar, 2017). In addition, possession envy is a strong predictor of consumer purchase intention. The relationship between possession envy and consumer purchase intention describes the competitive behavior of fellow consumers (Buunk & Massar, 2012), which evokes the intention to buy a product caused by the envy.

## Conclusions and Implications

The results of the present study provide theoretical foundations and managerial guidelines for e-commerce and social media marketing strategies via various interaction mechanisms and celebgram trustworthiness in evoking emotions and increasing purchase intention. There is an important finding that celebgram trustworthiness does not evoke followers' envy, despite the effect on consumer purchase intention. On the contrary, interaction with followers constitutes a catalyst in building consumer emotions in increasing purchase intention.

### *Theoretical Implications*

The results of the present study provide theoretical contributions to retailing and consumer service and offer theoretical elucidation for Instafamous management-based marketing strategies. **First**, it corroborates the social comparison theory related



to emotions or envy in terms of possession, which goes <sup>1</sup> far beyond the existing literature, where the relationship between possession envy and consumer purchase intention is only illustrated by the status of celebrities who are well known via mainstream media (Lin, 2018). **Second**, this study corroborates PSI theory in terms of celebgram trustworthiness, which derives from celebgrams' personal credibility and social attractiveness via photo posts with various types of poses, both selfies and in groups.

#### <sup>10</sup> Managerial implications

The present study offers a new insight for marketers into social media which is useful for developing brand management strategies in the context of instafamous-based marketing. Marketers need to strategically select celebrities, both women and men, who are trustworthy as active supporters to form PSI with consumers who have considered the celebgram as their own friends, so as to increase purchase intention of the endorsed products. When this interaction occurs emotionally, possession envy would be evoked and in the end capable of increasing consumer purchase intention. Instafamous-based marketing allows companies to develop closer relationships through continuous brand communication which in turn can increase sales and customer loyalty (Xiang, Zheng, Lee, & Zhao, 2016). The present study empirically corroborates the perceived celebgram trustworthiness through the quality of contents and content creators who are able to interact with consumers in influencing purchase intention.

#### Limitation and Further Studies

First, marketing in the digital era that utilizes social media makes consumers more active and interactive with marketers (Hanna, Rohm, & Crittenden, 2011). Given that there are so many brand variants and an increasingly diverse marketplace, it is necessary to undertake more in-depth studies related to consumer engagement (Dessart, Veloutsou, & Morgan-Thomas, 2015) by (1) using experimental designs with regard to source credibility with experimental types of photos, both selfies and in groups; (2) using gender moderation variables to determine the differences in possession envy between men and women when looking at celebgram influencers; (3) studies are required regarding the correlation of well-known brands to new celebgrams or well-known celebgrams to new brands. Thus, an effective engagement

strategy will be found in using celebgrams as influencers (Men & Tsai, 2016). Second, given that marketing on social media e-WOM is a strong antecedent to consumer purchase intention (Wang & Yu, 2017), studies are required regarding celebgram popularity (i.e., number of followers) and brand popularity (i.e., number of likes and comments), peer content analysis, and product reviews. Thus, various comments from Instagram and e-WoM users will provide deeper insight into the role of celebgrams and brand popularity in interactions on e-commerce.

#### **Author disclosure statement**

No competing financial interests exist.

#### **Acknowledgments**

The authors wish to express their gratitude to the editor and anonymous reviewers for their time.

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