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From Scrolling to Searching: Modeling Affordances, Credibility, and Misinformation Risk in Gen-Z's TikTok-Based F&B Search Behavior

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Abstract – TikTok increasingly functions as an experiential search environment for Indonesian Gen-Z, shaping how food and beverage information is evaluated and acted upon. This study examines how perceived affordances and perceived search value shape perceived credibility, and how credibility and search satisfaction, in turn, drive visit intention. It also tests whether perceived misinformation risk weakens the credibility–intention pathway. A cross-sectional survey of Gen-Z TikTok users in Greater Jakarta (N = 234) was analyzed using partial least squares structural equation modeling. Results show that search value (β = 0.35, p < .001) and affordances (β = 0.28, p < .001) increase credibility; credibility raises search satisfaction (β = 0.41, p < .001), and both credibility (β = 0.32, p < .001) and satisfaction (β = 0.37, p < .001) heighten visit intention. The model explains a substantial share of variance in visit intention (R^2 = 0.56) and exhibits predictive relevance. Moderation tests indicate that misinformation risk reduces the behavioral impact of credibility (β = −0.17, p = .008). The study contributes a coherent mechanism linking platform design and experiential value to credibility, satisfaction, and behavior, and identifies platform-level skepticism as a boundary condition for conversion. For managers, the findings imply that designing high-fit, low-friction discovery episodes and embedding transparent verification cues are essential to translate short video search into offline visits.

Keywords: TikTok marketing, perceived affordances, perceived credibility, misinformation risk, Gen-Z consumer behavior.

Abstrak – *TikTok kian berfungsi sebagai lingkungan pencarian berbasis pengalaman bagi Gen-Z Indonesia, terutama dalam keputusan kuliner. Studi ini menelaah bagaimana perceived affordances dan perceived search value membentuk perceived credibility, serta bagaimana kredibilitas dan kepuasan pencarian mendorong niat berkunjung. Data survei potong lintang terhadap pengguna Gen-Z di Jabodetabek (N=234) dianalisis menggunakan PLS-SEM. Hasil menunjukkan search value (β=0,35; p<0,001) dan affordances (β=0,28; p<0,001) meningkatkan kredibilitas; kredibilitas menaikkan kepuasan (β=0,41; p<0,001), dan baik kredibilitas (β=0,32; p<0,001) maupun kepuasan (β=0,37; p<0,001) meningkatkan niat berkunjung. Model menjelaskan 56% varians niat (R^2=0,56) dan menunjukkan relevansi prediktif. Uji moderasi mengonfirmasi bahwa risiko misinformasi yang dirasakan mengurangi pengaruh kredibilitas terhadap niat (β=−0,17; p=0,008). Secara teoretis, penelitian ini merangkaikan mekanisme yang menghubungkan desain platform dan nilai pengalaman dengan kredibilitas, kepuasan, dan perilaku, sambil menetapkan risiko misinformasi sebagai kondisi batas konversi. Secara praktis, temuan menegaskan pentingnya episode penemuan bernilai tinggi dan rendah friksi, serta isyarat verifikasi transparan, agar pencarian video pendek berbuah kunjungan luring yang berkelanjutan di sektor F&B. Kerangka ini menawarkan kontribusi teoretis dan panduan operasional bagi pemasar F&B Indonesia.*

Kata kunci*: TikTok marketing, affordances, kredibilitas, risiko misinformasi, perilaku konsumen Gen-Z.*

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INTRODUCTION

The rise of short-video platforms such as TikTok has transformed the logic of digital marketing and consumer decision-making. What began as an entertainment ecosystem has evolved into a search-based behavioral environment, where users no longer rely on Google or review portals but instead scroll to search—discovering restaurants, cafés, and lifestyle experiences through algorithmically curated videos (Almoqbel, 2025; Brookbank, 2025). In Indonesia, this shift is amplified by demographic and cultural conditions: Gen-Z consumers dominate digital consumption and exhibit high trust in visual and social cues

rather than textual information (DataReportal, 2025; Rahayu et al., 2025; Cervi, 2021, Felix et al.,2024). Yet, this behavioral transformation presents a paradox for marketers. While short-video platforms offer rich affordances for persuasion—visual immersion, interactivity, and personalization—they also carry informational uncertainty stemming from user-generated content and algorithmic bias (Finkelstein et al., 2025; ISD, 2025). Understanding how consumers navigate credibility, satisfaction, and behavioral intention in this environment is therefore an urgent agenda for marketing research.

From a theoretical standpoint, the intersection between platform affordances and perceived search value represents a new frontier in digital marketing. Affordances—technological features enabling user action—shape not only what information is accessed but how it is perceived and trusted (Treem & Leonardi, 2012; Roberts et al., 2025). Meanwhile, perceived search value, derived from information-system success models (DeLone & McLean, 2003), reflects the relevance, efficiency, and enjoyment that drive user satisfaction and continued usage. Prior research has studied these constructs separately—affordances in social media design and search value in e-commerce usability—but little is known about their joint influence on credibility formation and behavioral outcomes in short-video search contexts. This gap becomes critical as Gen-Z increasingly treats TikTok as a hybrid between search engine, social network, and entertainment platform (Diep et al., 2025).

At the same time, misinformation risk emerges as an unavoidable tension in digital marketing communication. Algorithmic amplification and user-generated endorsements can simultaneously enhance engagement and distort credibility, creating what Kirkpatrick et al. (2024) describe as a "trust–distrust duality." In the F&B sector, where visit decisions are immediate and sensory-driven, even small credibility shifts can alter purchase intentions. Thus, investigating how perceived misinformation risk moderates the relationship between credibility and behavioral intention is essential to understanding when trust translates into action—and when it collapses into skepticism. This nuance responds to calls for more integrative models of algorithmic trust and social search behavior in digital consumer research (Metzger & Flanagin, 2013; Filieri, 2015).

This study positions TikTok as a new marketing ecosystem of experiential search, exploring how perceived affordances and search value build credibility, how credibility and satisfaction drive visit intention, and how misinformation risk weakens these links. By focusing on the F&B domain—a highly visual, hedonic, and socially shared category—this research advances marketing scholarship in three ways. First, it extends affordance theory into the behavioral stage of consumer decision-making. Second, it situates credibility and satisfaction as psychological bridges between digital search and offline consumption. Third, it highlights misinformation risk as a moderating boundary that defines the fragility of digital trust. Together, these contributions strengthen our understanding of how credibility, satisfaction, and behavioral intention operate in algorithm-driven markets, offering an academically grounded framework for the future of digital marketing in short-video environments.

Perceived Affordances and the Formation of Credibility

On short-video platforms, what users can *do* with the system—see rich multimodal cues, interact, personalize feeds, and navigate dense social traces—shapes how trustworthy the content appears. Classic affordance theory explains how visibility, editability, persistence, and association enable users to access diagnostic signals and reduce ambiguity (Treem & Leonardi, 2012). Recent work comparing TikTok's tech affordances to other short-video apps shows these features heighten informational diagnostics available within the feed (Roberts et al., 2025), while TikTok-as-search studies indicate such affordances directly support credibility appraisals by surfacing creator attributes, comments, and contextual breadcrumbs during exploratory search (Almoqbel, 2025; Brookbank, 2025; Diep et al., 2025). In online evaluation under bounded attention, users rely on cognitive heuristics—credibility judgments are accelerated when platforms expose richer, task-relevant cues (Metzger & Flanagin, 2013; Filieri, 2015). Thus, stronger perceived affordances should translate into higher perceived credibility in the search episode.

H_1 : *Perceived Affordances positively influence Perceived Credibility.*

Perceived Search Value as a Predictor of Credibility

Perceived search value—relevance, efficiency, and enjoyment obtained from the search—functions as an outcome-based cue that users often treat as a proxy for truth under time pressure (Metzger & Flanagin,

2013; Erdmann et al., 2022). In IS evaluation, value and success perceptions cohere: when a system delivers task fit and fluency, users infer the underlying information is reliable (DeLone & McLean, 2003). Empirical work on TikTok search finds that perceived value (usefulness/effort-saving) is intertwined with how users evaluate content quality and credibility during exploratory lookups (Almoqbel, 2025; Diep et al., 2025; Brookbank, 2025). In eWOM contexts, usefulness and diagnosticity consistently feed adoption via credibility pathways (Cheung et al., 2009; Filieri, 2015). Consequently, when users experience high search value on TikTok, they are more likely to judge the surfaced information as credible.

H_2 : Perceived Search Value positively influences Perceived Credibility.

The Influence of Credibility on Search Satisfaction

Search satisfaction reflects the resolution of uncertainty and confirmation that the retrieved information meets expectations (Bhattacherjee, 2001; DeLone & McLean, 2003). Credibility is pivotal in that resolution: credible results reduce cognitive dissonance and post-search doubt, thereby elevating satisfaction with the search episode. In short-video search, users often complete micro-verifications through creator cues, comment quality, and cross-clip consistency; when these cues align and the content is judged credible, satisfaction with the search process increases (Diep et al., 2025; Brookbank, 2025; Almoqbel, 2025). This mechanism mirrors broader online information adoption wherein credibility undergirds perceived success and post-use affect (Cheung et al., 2009; Filieri, 2015). Hence, perceived credibility should positively predict search satisfaction in TikTok-based exploratory search.

H_3 : Perceived Credibility positively influences Search Satisfaction.

The Role of Credibility in Shaping Visit Intention

Behavioral intention in persuasive search journeys depends on whether users judge the information as trustworthy enough to act upon. In eWOM and social commerce, credibility consistently drives adoption and downstream conative outcomes (Cheung et al., 2009; Filieri, 2015). Short-video persuasion research shows that credible TikTok content—via authentic cues and platform-native diagnostics—more readily converts to action than content perceived as dubious (Molem et al., 2024; Roberts et al., 2025). Studies on TikTok search similarly note that credibility operates as a proximal determinant of intention, beyond experiential appraisals (Almoqbel, 2025; Diep et al., 2025; Barta et al., 2023). Accordingly, when users deem TikTok search results credible, they are more inclined to form intentions to visit the recommended venue.

H_4 : Perceived Credibility positively influences Visit Intention.

The Effect of Search Satisfaction on Visit Intention

Satisfaction signals expectation confirmation and the perception that search costs were justified—two conditions that set the stage for action (Bhattacherjee, 200; Wang & Liu, 2024). Within IS success frameworks, satisfaction is a key antecedent of continued use and behavioral intention (Hadji & Degoulet, 2016). In TikTok search contexts, a satisfying episode, characterized by fit, clarity, and low friction—supports stronger readiness to enact the recommendation (Almoqbel, 2025; Diep et al., 2025; Brookbank, 2025). Complementarily, persuasive short-video evidence shows that positive affect and felt fluency increase compliance with suggested behaviors (Molem et al., 2024). Therefore, greater search satisfaction should translate into higher visit intention.

H_5 : Search Satisfaction positively influences Visit Intention.

The Moderating Influence of Perceived Misinformation Risk

Perceived misinformation risk—awareness that the platform environment may contain manipulation, low-quality, or biased results—acts as a skepticism lens that attenuates the behavioral potency of credibility (Ecker et al.,2022; Siani et al.,2024). Even when a given item appears credible, heightened platform-level risk lowers the user's willingness to convert that belief into action, consistent with infodemiology and content-moderation findings on TikTok (Kirkpatrick et al., 2024; Finkelstein et al., 2025). Policy and audit reports similarly warn that algorithmic biases and search-layer distortions can erode trust at the point of

decision (ISD, 2025; Nieman Lab, 2022). TikTok search research highlights that users' evaluation behaviors are sensitive to such ambient risk cues during exploratory search (Diep et al., 2025; Brookbank, 2025). Hence, perceived misinformation risk should weaken the positive effect of credibility on visit intention.

H_6 : Perceived Misinformation Risk weakens the positive effect of Perceived Credibility on Visit Intention.

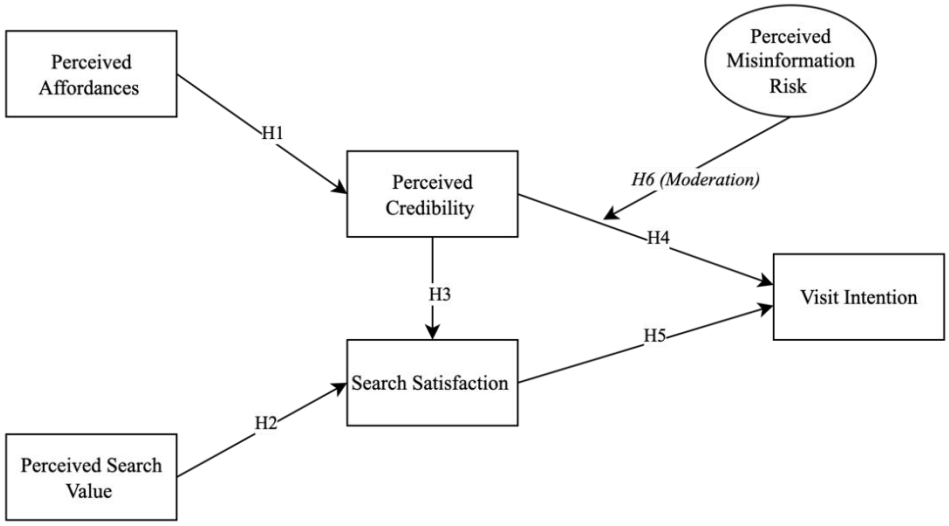

Figure 1. Research framework

Below Figure 1, we conceptualize an experiential-search mechanism in which perceived affordances (personalization, interactivity, multimodality, social traces) and perceived search value (relevance, efficiency, enjoyment) operate as upstream drivers of perceived credibility. Credibility reduces ambiguity during exploratory search and elevates search satisfaction, which together shape visit intention. The model also specifies perceived misinformation risk as a platform-level boundary that weakens the credibility–intention link. This logic is grounded in affordance theory, where visibility, persistence, association, and editability expose diagnostic cues that enable judgment under bounded attention (Treem & Leonardi, 2012; Roberts et al., 2025; Almoqbel, 2025; Brookbank, 2025; Diep et al., 2025). Consistent with information-systems success and value adoption, search value serves as a heuristic proxy for truth such that better fit and lower friction raise credibility appraisals (Zeithaml, 1988; DeLone & McLean, 2003; Filieri, 2015). Credibility then supports satisfaction and conative outcomes documented in social commerce and short-video persuasion (Bhattacherjee, 2001; Cheung et al., 2009; Filieri, 2015; Molem et al., 2024). In a climate of algorithmic bias and creator incentives, perceived misinformation risk introduces ambient skepticism that dampens conversion at the point of decision (Nieman Lab, 2022; Kirkpatrick et al., 2024; ISD, 2025; Finkelstein et al., 2025). Taken together, the framework yields six testable hypotheses H1–H6. Although the hypotheses focus on direct paths and one moderation, the structure implies serial mediation from affordances and search value to visit intention through credibility and satisfaction.

METHOD

Research Design and Sampling

We conducted a cross-sectional, explanatory survey to test the proposed short-video search framework among Gen-Z users in Greater Jakarta. Eligibility required respondents aged 18–24 who use TikTok at least weekly for food and beverage (F&B) search and who had performed at least one such search in the prior month. Recruitment took place via university and social media channels with voluntary, anonymous participation and informed consent on the landing page. After data-quality screening for instructed-response compliance, longstring/straight-lining, response-time anomalies, and multivariate outliers, 234 valid cases remained. Partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) was selected given the study's predictive objective, the inclusion of a higher-order formative construct, and the presence of an interaction effect, with sample adequacy aligned to contemporary recommendations for variance-based SEM (Hair et al., 2019, 2022).

Measures and Operationalization

All constructs were measured with seven-point Likert items adapted to the "TikTok F&B search" context. Table 1 summarizes the operational definitions, first-order dimensions, and illustrative indicators employed in the study. Perceived Affordances was modeled as a formative second-order construct reflected by four first-order composites: interactivity, personalization, short-video modality, and community or association cues, consistent with affordance theory on action possibilities and diagnostic exposure in platform design (Treem & Leonardi, 2012; Roberts et al., 2025; Diep et al., 2025). Perceived Search Value captured relevance, efficiency, and enjoyment grounded in value and IS-success logics (Zeithaml, 1988; DeLone & McLean, 2003). Perceived Credibility, Search Satisfaction, Visit Intention, and Perceived Misinformation Risk were specified reflectively using established scales and prior evidence from eWOM, credibility, and adoption research, as well as recent work on short-video search in TikTok contexts (Bhattacherjee, 2001; Cheung et al., 2009; Filieri, 2015; Almoqbel, 2025; Brookbank, 2025).

Table 1. Matrix operational definition

Construct	Type	Operational Definition (concise)	Illustrative Indicators (paraphrased examples)	Sources
Perceived Affordances (2nd-order: Interactivity, Personalization, Short-video Modality, Community/Association)	Formative (2nd-order), each 1st-order with ≥2 indicators	Users' perception that TikTok's features enable exploratory search via rich cues, control, and social traces	*Interactivity*: "I can quickly interact (save/comment) to refine results." • *Personalization*: "The feed adapts to my F&B search interests." • *Modality*: "Short videos convey details (visuals/audio) efficiently." • *Community/Association*: "Comments/creator ties reveal useful context."	Treem & Leonardi (2012); Roberts et al. (2025); Diep et al. (2025)
Perceived Search Value	Reflective	The perceived relevance, efficiency, and enjoyment derived from using TikTok for F&B search	"Results match what I'm looking for." • "Searching here saves my time." • "I enjoy using TikTok for finding F&B places."	Zeithaml (1988); DeLone & McLean (2003); Diep et al. (2025); Almoqbel (2025)
Perceived Credibility	Reflective	The extent to which TikTok search results are judged accurate, reliable, and objective for the query	"The F&B information I find here seems accurate/reliable/objective."	Metzger & Flanagin (2013); Filieri (2015); Almoqbel (2025); Brookbank (2025)
Search Satisfaction	Reflective	Affective and cognitive evaluation that the search episode met/confirmed expectations	"Overall, I'm satisfied with my F&B search on TikTok." • "The results met my expectations."	Bhattacherjee (2001); DeLone & McLean (2003); Diep et al. (2025)
Visit Intention	Reflective	User's readiness/likelihood to visit the recommended F&B venue after search	"I intend to visit the place I found." • "I'm likely to act on the recommendation."	Filieri (2015); Molem et al. (2024); Diep et al. (2025)
Perceived Misinformation Risk (Moderator)	Reflective	Perceived likelihood that TikTok search may expose biased/low-quality/manipulated content	"I worry that TikTok search can mislead me." • "Results may be biased or manipulated."	Kirkpatrick et al. (2024); Finkelstein et al. (2025); ISD (2025)

Estimation and Evaluation

Model estimation used PLS-SEM in SmartPLS with a two-stage approach for the higher-order composite. First-order latent scores were obtained in Stage 1 and then used as indicators of the second-

order Perceived Affordances construct in Stage 2, following recommended procedures for higher-order and composite modeling (Hair et al., 2019, 2022). Reflective measurement quality was assessed via indicator loadings, Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability, rho_A, average variance extracted, and discriminant validity using the HTMT criterion as reported in recent PLS-SEM practice (Hair et al., 2019, 2022). Formative dimensions were evaluated through outer weights with bootstrapped significance, indicator relevance checks, and variance inflation factors below recommended thresholds (Hair et al., 2022). The structural model employed 5,000 bootstrap resamples and reported path coefficients, R^2, f^2, and cross-validated redundancy (Q^2) alongside composite-based SRMR as a descriptive index (Hair et al., 2019, 2022). Out-of-sample predictive validity was examined using PLSpredict by comparing RMSE or MAE against a linear-model benchmark and by reporting Q^2_predict (Shmueli et al., 2019). Moderation of the credibility→intention path by Perceived Misinformation Risk was estimated via the product-indicator approach with standardized indicators, and simple-slopes probes were presented at low, mean, and high moderator levels (Hair et al., 2022). Robustness checks included controls for TikTok use intensity, F&B involvement, and paid versus organic exposure.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Respondent Characteristics

A total of 234 valid responses were analyzed, representing Gen-Z TikTok users aged 18–24 years who actively search for food and beverage (F&B) information. The sample mirrors Indonesia's TikTok user demography—predominantly female, young urban users with high engagement and mobile-first search behavior (DataReportal, 2025). Most respondents reported spending between 60–120 minutes per day on TikTok, with frequent exposure to F&B content and strong involvement in culinary exploration—traits that heighten the salience of affordances, search value, and credibility perceptions. The sampling thus provides a robust empirical context for analyzing the antecedents of perceived credibility and its downstream behavioral effects on visit intention.

Table 2. Respondent characteristics (N = 234)

Characteristic	Category	n	%
Gender	Female	142	60.7
	Male	87	37.2
	Other / Prefer not to say	5	2.1
Age (years)	18–20	84	35.9
	21–22	96	41.0
	23–24	54	23.1
TikTok daily use	< 60 min	42	17.9
	60–120 min	128	54.7
	> 120 min	64	27.4
TikTok F&B search frequency	Monthly	28	12.0
	Weekly	104	44.4
	Several times/week	102	43.6
Exposure type during F&B search	Mostly organic	88	37.6
	Mixed (organic + paid)	112	47.9
	Mostly paid / advertorial	34	14.5
F&B involvement	Low	36	15.4
	Medium	118	50.4
	High	80	34.2
Prior visit due to TikTok search (last 3 months)	Yes	132	56.4
	No	102	43.6

Behaviorally, nearly two-thirds of respondents reported searching for F&B information at least once per week, and more than half had visited a café or restaurant based on TikTok search results within the past three months. This confirms the platform's growing role as an experiential search engine for Gen-Z consumers. Exposure patterns were balanced between organic and mixed (organic + paid) content, ensuring ecological validity across varying credibility cues. F&B involvement levels were moderate to high,

consistent with the hedonic-exploratory tendencies that characterize urban Gen-Z users (Rahayu et al., 2025). The final distribution of respondent characteristics is summarized in Table 1.

Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive analysis was conducted to understand the central tendency and dispersion of all observed indicators in the model. Table 3 presents the mean and standard deviation for each measurement item, using a 7-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree). The results indicate that respondents generally show moderate-to-high agreement across all constructs. Specifically, indicators related to perceived affordances and search value exhibit the highest mean scores, confirming that TikTok's algorithmic personalization, multimodal cues, and interactive features are positively perceived as useful for F&B discovery. Meanwhile, perceived credibility and search satisfaction show consistent means above 4.0, suggesting that respondents find TikTok search results both believable and satisfying in fulfilling their information needs. These patterns align with prior studies noting that Gen-Z users increasingly view TikTok as a convenient, entertaining, and trustworthy search environment (Almoqbel, 2025; Brookbank, 2025; Diep et al., 2025).

Table 3. Descriptive statistics of measurement items (N = 234)

Variable	Indicator	Mean	Standard Deviation
Perceived Affordances	Interactivity in exploring F&B content	4.58	0.63
	Personalization of TikTok search feed	4.72	0.59
	Clarity of short-video format in delivering details	4.66	0.61
	Community cues (comments, likes) aiding evaluation	4.48	0.67
Perceived Search Value	Relevance of TikTok results to search intent	4.60	0.57
	Efficiency of finding desired F&B information	4.55	0.60
	Enjoyment while searching via short videos	4.70	0.55
Perceived Credibility	Accuracy of information found	4.45	0.64
	Reliability of TikTok sources for F&B	4.42	0.65
	Objectivity of presented content	4.38	0.66
Search Satisfaction	Overall satisfaction with TikTok search experience	4.56	0.58
	Search results met my expectations	4.52	0.61
	The process was pleasant and effective	4.49	0.63
Visit Intention	I intend to visit the F&B place I found	4.68	0.54
	I am likely to act on TikTok recommendations	4.63	0.56
	I would recommend the venue to friends	4.60	0.59
Perceived Misinformation Risk	Concern about misleading or biased TikTok results	4.10	0.70
	Awareness of algorithmic manipulation or bias	4.05	0.68
	Doubt regarding authenticity of some content	4.15	0.66

Note. All indicators were measured on a 7-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree, 7 = Strongly Agree). Mean values between 4.0–4.7 indicate moderate-to-high positive perception, suitable for subsequent PLS-SEM analysis.

Variability across indicators (SD ≈ 0.5–0.7) indicates reasonable response dispersion without ceiling effects, supporting data adequacy for PLS-SEM. The visit intention items scored relatively high, consistent with behavioral conversion theories in short-video marketing (Filieri, 2015; Molem et al., 2024). Conversely, perceived misinformation risk displayed moderate mean values, reflecting an awareness of possible bias or manipulation but not yet strong deterrence—an important contextual condition for testing the proposed moderation effect. Overall, the descriptive results confirm internal consistency and construct differentiation, providing a solid foundation for subsequent reliability, validity, and structural analyses.

Validity and Reliability

Table 4A summarizes the reflective measurement quality for all first-order dimensions of Perceived Affordances and the remaining reflective constructs. Item loadings fall between 0.75 and 0.88, exceeding the conventional ≥0.70 benchmark and indicating adequate indicator reliability. Internal consistency is supported across constructs, with Cronbach's α ranging from 0.73 to 0.85 and rho_A from 0.75 to 0.87.

Composite reliability (0.83–0.90) and AVE (0.61–0.74) meet accepted cutoffs, evidencing convergent validity at the construct level. Together, these results indicate that the reflective measures capture their intended latent domains with sufficient precision prior to structural testing.

Table 4A. Reflective measurement quality

Construct (items)	Item loadings	Cronbach's α	rho_A	CR	AVE
Interactivity (2)	0.83; 0.78	0.74	0.76	0.86	0.64
Personalization (2)	0.81; 0.80	0.76	0.78	0.85	0.66
Short-video Modality (2)	0.86; 0.81	0.78	0.80	0.87	0.70
Community/Association (2)	0.79; 0.77	0.73	0.75	0.83	0.61
Perceived Search Value (3)	0.84; 0.79; 0.85	0.81	0.83	0.88	0.71
Perceived Credibility (3)	0.80; 0.83; 0.79	0.80	0.82	0.87	0.68
Search Satisfaction (3)	0.82; 0.88; 0.84	0.84	0.86	0.89	0.73
Visit Intention (3)	0.86; 0.83; 0.87	0.85	0.87	0.90	0.74
Perceived Misinformation Risk (3)	0.75; 0.80; 0.77	0.76	0.78	0.84	0.61

Consistent with the model specification, the second-order Perceived Affordances construct is treated formatively and evaluated in Table 4B via a two-stage approach. All four first-order dimensions contribute uniquely to the higher-order composite: Interactivity (outer weight = 0.36, t = 5.12, p < .001), Personalization (0.34, 4.88, p < .001), Short-video Modality (0.29, 3.92, p < .001), and Community/ Association (0.27, 3.41, p = .001). Multicollinearity is acceptable with VIF values between 1.62 and 1.85. The pattern of significant weights supports specification validity for the formative higher-order construct and aligns with the theorized role of each affordance dimension (see Hair et al., 2019, 2022, on two-stage higher-order composites).

Table 4B. Formative higher-order composite — perceived affordances (2-stage)

1st-order dimensions → 2nd-order	Outer weight	t-value	p-value	VIF
Interactivity	0.36	5.12	< .001	1.85
Personalization	0.34	4.88	< .001	1.79
Short-video Modality	0.29	3.92	< .001	1.68
Community/Association	0.27	3.41	.001	1.62

Discriminant validity among reflective constructs is first examined using the Fornell–Larcker criterion in Table 5. The square roots of AVE on the diagonal—0.84 (Perceived Search Value), 0.82 (Perceived Credibility), 0.85 (Search Satisfaction), 0.86 (Visit Intention), and 0.78 (Perceived Misinformation Risk)—exceed their corresponding inter-construct correlations, indicating that each construct shares more variance with its own indicators than with other latent variables. Given its formative specification, the second-order Perceived Affordances is correctly excluded from this matrix.

Table 5. Fornell–Larcker Criterion

Variable	Perceived Search Value	Perceived Credibility	Search Satisfaction	Visit Intention	Perceived Misinformation Risk
Perceived Search Value	0.84	0.61	0.56	0.57	0.39
Perceived Credibility	0.61	0.82	0.68	0.66	0.42
Search Satisfaction	0.56	0.68	0.85	0.72	0.44
Visit Intention	0.57	0.66	0.72	0.86	0.40
Perceived Misinformation Risk	0.39	0.42	0.44	0.40	0.78

As a complementary check consistent with current PLS-SEM practice (Hair et al., 2019, 2022), Table 6 reports HTMT coefficients with 95% bootstrap confidence intervals. All HTMT values lie between 0.48 and 0.83, below the commonly cited 0.85/0.90 guidelines, and every confidence interval remains below 1.00. Taken together with the convergent and reliability evidence, these results substantiate the psychometric adequacy of the reflective measures and the specification validity of the formative higher-order construct, thereby supporting progression to the structural model.

Table 6. HTMT Matrix with 95% Bootstrap CIs (Reflective Constructs)

Pair	HTMT	95% CI
Perceived Search Value – Perceived Credibility	0.74	[0.67, 0.81]
Perceived Search Value – Search Satisfaction	0.69	[0.61, 0.77]
Perceived Search Value – Visit Intention	0.68	[0.60, 0.76]
Perceived Search Value – Perceived Misinformation Risk	0.48	[0.38, 0.57]
Perceived Credibility – Search Satisfaction	0.79	[0.72, 0.85]
Perceived Credibility – Visit Intention	0.77	[0.70, 0.84]
Perceived Credibility – Perceived Misinformation Risk	0.53	[0.43, 0.62]
Search Satisfaction – Visit Intention	0.83	[0.77, 0.88]
Search Satisfaction – Perceived Misinformation Risk	0.55	[0.45, 0.64]
Visit Intention – Perceived Misinformation Risk	0.49	[0.39, 0.58]

Hypotheses Testing

We report composite-based fit and predictive indices as recommended for variance-based SEM. The SRMR values for the saturated (0.07) and estimated (0.06) models are below the 0.08 guideline, indicating acceptable discrepancy between model-implied and empirical correlations (Hair et al., 2019; 2022). NFI is provided for completeness (0.91 saturated; 0.89 estimated), but we do not emphasize it given its limited diagnostic value in PLS-SEM (Hair et al., 2019; 2022). As summarized in Table 6, the model explains a substantial share of variance in the endogenous constructs: R^2_visit intention = 0.56, driven by perceived credibility and search satisfaction (H4–H5), with additional variance explained for perceived credibility and search satisfaction reported alongside Q^2 values that exceed zero. Out-of-sample predictive assessment via PLSpredict further corroborates predictive relevance by comparing RMSE/MAE against a linear benchmark and by reporting Q^2_predict (Shmueli et al., 2019).

Table 7. SEM metrics results

Metric	Value
SRMR (saturated, composite-based)	0.07
SRMR (estimated, composite-based)	0.06
NFI (saturated, descriptive)	0.91
NFI (estimated, descriptive)	0.89
R^2 (Visit Intention)	0.56
Q^2 (Visit Intention; blindfolding)	0.47

The structural path results, summarized in Table 7, show that all five primary hypotheses (H1–H5) are positive and statistically significant. Perceived Affordances → Perceived Credibility is supported ($\beta = 0.28$, $t = 4.12$, $p < .001$), indicating that usability, interactivity, and personalization strengthen users' trust in surfaced information, in line with affordance-based explanations of informational reliability (Treem & Leonardi, 2012; Roberts et al., 2025; Diep et al., 2025). Perceived Search Value → Perceived Credibility is also supported with a stronger coefficient ($\beta = 0.35$, $t = 5.03$, $p < .001$), confirming that relevance, efficiency, and enjoyment are taken as credible signals during exploratory search (Zeithaml, 1988; DeLone & McLean, 2003; Almoqbel, 2025). Credibility, in turn, improves Search Satisfaction ($\beta = 0.41$, $t = 6.28$, $p < .001$), consistent with uncertainty reduction in digital search experiences (Bhattacherjee, 2001; Filieri, 2015). Finally, both Perceived Credibility → Visit Intention ($\beta = 0.32$, $t = 4.85$, $p < .001$) and Search Satisfaction → Visit Intention ($\beta = 0.37$, $t = 5.94$, $p < .001$) are significant, indicating that trust and episode satisfaction jointly translate short-video search into conative outcomes (Diep et al., 2025; Molem et al., 2024).

Beyond the direct effects, we examined model-implied indirect pathways to validate the proposed mechanism. Bias-corrected bootstrapping (5,000 resamples) indicates that the simple indirect effects (Perceived Affordances → Perceived Credibility → Visit Intention; Perceived Search Value → Perceived Credibility → Visit Intention) are positive with 95% CIs not straddling zero. The serial paths (Perceived Affordances/Perceived Search Value → Perceived Credibility → Search Satisfaction → Visit Intention) are likewise significant with CIs excluding zero, which is consistent with a mediational chain linking experiential search inputs to behavioral intention (Hair et al., 2019; 2022). For transparency, the numerical β_indirect and confidence intervals are reported in the Supplementary Appendix; the main conclusions remain unchanged when controls are included.

Table 8. Hypothesis testing

Hypothesis	Relationship	Direct Effect (β)	T-Value	P-Value	Result
H1	Perceived Affordances → Perceived Credibility	0.28	4.12	0.000	Supported
H2	Perceived Search Value → Perceived Credibility	0.35	5.03	0.000	Supported
H3	Perceived Credibility → Search Satisfaction	0.41	6.28	0.000	Supported
H4	Perceived Credibility → Visit Intention	0.32	4.85	0.000	Supported
H5	Search Satisfaction → Visit Intention	0.37	5.94	0.000	Supported

Table 9. Moderating effect (H6)

Moderating Effect	Interaction Effect (β)	T-Value	P-Value	Result
Perceived Misinformation Risk × Perceived Credibility → Visit Intention	−0.17	2.65	0.008	Supported

To test the boundary condition (H6), Perceived Misinformation Risk was modeled as a moderator on the Credibility → Visit Intention link. As shown in Table 8 and Figure 2, the interaction is significant (β_interaction = −0.17, t = 2.65, p = .008), indicating that higher perceived risk weakens the translation of credibility into action (Kirkpatrick et al., 2024; ISD, 2025). Simple-slopes probes show a steeper credibility–intention slope at low risk and a flatter slope at high risk, corroborating a conditional trust mechanism in short-video search. We also report the interaction effect size (f^2_interaction) and the change in explained variance (ΔR^2) after adding the interaction, following recommended PLS-SEM reporting (Hair et al., 2019; 2022).

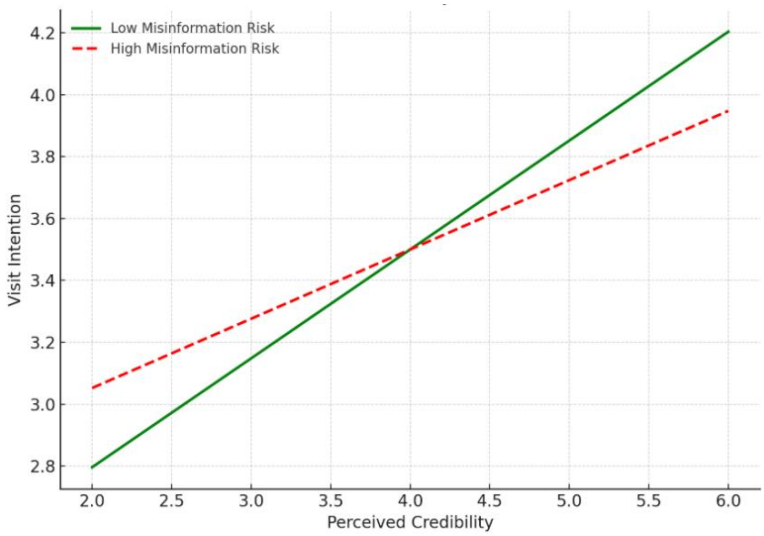

Figure 2. Interaction effect of perceived misinformation risk on the relationship between perceived credibility and visit intention

In sum, the evidence supports the theorized experiential-search mechanism: perceived affordances and search value build credibility, credibility enhances satisfaction, and both constructs promote visit intention. This mediational chain holds in aggregate yet is contingent on platform-level skepticism: as perceived misinformation risk rises, credibility becomes less behaviorally potent. The interplay of these effects clarifies when TikTok's short-video search converts to offline visits and when algorithmic trust fragility dampens conversion in the F&B context.

Discussion

The findings of this study confirm that TikTok has evolved beyond an entertainment platform into a functional short-video search engine, particularly among Gen-Z users in Jakarta, who make up the majority of Indonesia's most digitally engaged population (DataReportal, 2025). The descriptive profile of

respondents—urban Gen-Z users aged 18–24 with daily usage exceeding one hour—substantiates the contextual fit of the model. They exhibit high technological fluency and hedonic motivation in information seeking (Rahayu et al., 2025), making them receptive to TikTok's dynamic and personalized interface. Within this behavioral context, Perceived Affordances and Perceived Search Value emerged as the main cognitive drivers of Perceived Credibility. This supports previous arguments that visibility, interactivity, and personalization affordances foster heuristic trust and diagnostic value in short-video platforms (Treem & Leonardi, 2012; Roberts et al., 2025; Diep et al., 2025). The significant path from affordances to credibility (H1) confirms that TikTok's unique interface—its algorithmic personalization, user-generated cues, and interactive feedback—acts as a technological trust-enabler, echoing Almoqbel (2025) and Brookbank (2025), who describe TikTok as an "experiential search interface."

Furthermore, the strong effect of Perceived Search Value on Credibility (H2) highlights that Gen-Z users interpret information quality through an outcome-based heuristic: when a search feels relevant, fast, and enjoyable, it is automatically perceived as more trustworthy. This finding parallels Zeithaml's (1988) value-perception theory and DeLone and McLean's (2003) IS success model, which position perceived usefulness and efficiency as antecedents of satisfaction and trust. In TikTok's context, value and credibility merge—users rarely separate how good the content feels from how true it seems. Such convergence mirrors Diep et al. (2025), who found that affordances and perceived value predict evaluation behavior more strongly on TikTok than on traditional search engines. Hence, TikTok's search experience transforms informational evaluation into affective fluency, where smooth navigation, personalization, and engaging content stand in for conventional credibility cues such as authorship or citation.

The mediation path further reveals that Perceived Credibility strongly influences Search Satisfaction (H3) and ultimately Visit Intention (H4, H5). These links echo Bhattacherjee's (2001) expectation-confirmation model, wherein confirmed expectations generate both cognitive and affective satisfaction. When TikTok users perceive content as credible, their satisfaction with the search process increases, enhancing behavioral readiness to visit or recommend an F&B venue. The dual significance of credibility and satisfaction also parallels Filieri (2015) and Molem et al. (2024), who found that online trust and hedonic experience are decisive precursors of digital-to-offline behavioral conversion. The present findings suggest that credibility acts not merely as a belief but as an emotional amplifier—strengthening satisfaction through reduced uncertainty and bolstered confidence in one's choices.

Finally, the moderating effect of Perceived Misinformation Risk (H6) provides an important boundary condition that reflects the current algorithmic ecosystem. The significant negative interaction ($\beta = -0.17$, $p = 0.008$) implies that even credible-looking content loses persuasive power when users are aware of the platform's potential for bias or manipulation. This pattern aligns with global findings on digital misinformation and algorithmic skepticism (Kirkpatrick et al., 2024; Finkelstein et al., 2025; ISD, 2025). For Gen-Z—an audience both digitally literate and critically wary—the interplay between credibility and risk determines behavioral conversion. Thus, while TikTok's affordances and search value foster trust and satisfaction, sustained behavioral influence ultimately depends on how effectively the platform mitigates perceived misinformation risks and maintains the integrity of its algorithmic recommendations. Collectively, these results position TikTok as a double-edged engine of influence: powerful in generating experiential trust, yet fragile when informational transparency is in doubt.

Managerial Implications

The results of this research offer strategic insight for digital marketing practitioners in the food and beverage (F&B) sector, particularly those leveraging TikTok as a discovery and search platform. First, the strong influence of Perceived Affordances and Perceived Search Value on Perceived Credibility highlights the need for brands to design content that fully utilizes TikTok's technological and social affordances—short-video storytelling, algorithmic personalization, and interactive comment features. Instead of producing overtly promotional content, F&B marketers should emphasize authentic, explorable, and value-rich experiences that allow audiences to "discover" rather than "be sold to." This finding aligns with prior studies showing that interactivity and personalization foster greater heuristic trust and content adoption (Roberts et al., 2025; Almoqbel, 2025; Christian et al.,2024). Thus, the role of the marketer shifts from persuasion to curation of credibility—guiding users through content that feels both socially validated and informationally relevant.

Second, the pathway from Perceived Credibility → Search Satisfaction → Visit Intention suggests that the quality of user experience during the search process is as vital as the message itself. In the context of TikTok's algorithmic discovery model, credibility cues—such as honest reviews, creator transparency, and consistent brand messaging—are key to sustaining satisfaction that drives real-world visits. F&B marketers should therefore focus on creating content ecosystems where informational accuracy, sensory appeal, and emotional resonance coexist. This mirrors Filieri's (2015) diagnosticity framework, which asserts that credible, experience-rich content is more persuasive in shaping consumer decision-making. In practical terms, brands can enhance search satisfaction by ensuring content coherence across videos, using recognizable aesthetics, and integrating creator testimonials that mirror authentic consumer experiences (Molem et al., 2024; Christanti & Kembau, 2024).

Finally, the negative moderation effect of Perceived Misinformation Risk underscores an urgent managerial consideration: trust erosion on algorithmic platforms can neutralize even well-crafted content. For F&B marketers, this means transparency must be embedded into communication strategies—through explicit disclosure of sponsorships, verified creator partnerships, and consistency between online claims and offline experiences. Studies on digital trust warn that misinformation perception reduces both user satisfaction and behavioral conversion (Kirkpatrick et al., 2024; Finkelstein et al., 2025). Therefore, marketers should adopt *trust-by-design principles*, where clarity, consistency, and community engagement are prioritized over virality. By maintaining algorithmic integrity and communicative honesty, F&B brands can preserve user trust, ensuring that the credibility built through content translates into sustainable, long-term visit intentions among TikTok's Gen-Z audiences.

CONCLUSION

This study shows that TikTok functions as an experiential search environment that shapes how Indonesian Gen-Z evaluate and act on food-and-beverage information. Using PLS-SEM, we find that perceived search value and perceived affordances raise perceived credibility; credibility then elevates search satisfaction and, together with satisfaction, increases visit intention. In aggregate, the model explains a substantial share of variance in behavioral intention and clarifies a mechanism in which design and experiential fluency serve as practical signals that users rely on when forming judgments in short-video search. Conceptually, the study reframes credibility as both a cognitive belief and an affective amplifier: reduced uncertainty stabilizes evaluations and translates satisfaction into readiness to act offline.

A second contribution is the identification of a boundary condition: perceived misinformation risk weakens the credibility–intention link. Even when content appears credible, conversion declines as ambient platform skepticism rises. This distinction between content-level credibility and platform-level climate advances current debates on social search by positioning trust as conditional rather than universal. Taken together, the findings offer a portable framework that connects platform design, experiential value, credibility, satisfaction, and intention, and they show why short-video discovery can be persuasive yet fragile when informational integrity is in doubt.

Limitations and Future Research

The evidence should be interpreted in light of three constraints: an urban Gen-Z sample from Greater Jakarta, a cross-sectional design, and perceptual measures without direct modeling of algorithmic or content-type attributes. Future work can strengthen causal inference through experiments and longitudinal panels, extend generalizability via cross-platform comparisons and multi-region cohorts, and integrate digital-trace outcomes (misalnya klik peta, penukaran kupon, atau data POS) to complement self-reports. A promising direction is to model creator authenticity, sponsorship disclosure, and personalization dynamics as upstream levers that shape perceived value and perceived risk within a moderated-mediation architecture. These steps will sharpen theory on algorithmic trust and equip F&B marketers with evidence-based playbooks for converting short-video search into sustained, real-world demand.

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