

The Influence of Online Customer Review, Viral Marketing, and Shopping Convenience on Purchase Decisions on Shopee: Gender as a Moderating Variable

Yunike^{1*}

¹Program Studi Kewirausahaan, Institut Teknologi Bisnis dan Sabda Setia

*yunike.yunike@itbss.ac.id

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ABSTRACT

While e-commerce platforms like Shopee have integrated advanced digital marketing components, empirical gaps remain regarding how demographic profiles like gender moderate the effectiveness of these strategies within behavioral frameworks. Guided by the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), this study examines the partial, simultaneous, and moderated effects of online customer reviews, shopping convenience, and viral marketing on consumer purchase decisions on Shopee. Adopting a quantitative approach, survey data were gathered from 103 active Shopee users in Indonesia selected via purposive sampling and analyzed using Moderated Regression Analysis (MRA) in SPSS. The simultaneous and partial empirical findings reveal that online customer reviews and shopping convenience significantly and positively drive consumer purchase decisions. Conversely, viral marketing shows no significant partial effect. Furthermore, the interaction analysis clarifies that gender acts as a significant moderating variable, successfully moderating the relationship between these digital marketing factors and consumer buying decisions. This study enhances academic understanding by contextualizing TPB in digital retail and provides actionable insights for e-commerce marketers to optimize customized platform trust and navigation efficiency rather than over-relying on generic marketing campaigns.

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*Corresponding Author

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1. INTRODUCTION

The digital development has revolutionized how consumers interact with products and services, especially through e-commerce platforms such as Shopee. According to the Indonesian Internet Service Providers Association (APJII), the number of internet users in Indonesia reached 221.563 million in 2023, shifting daily buying behaviors from traditional brick-and-mortar stores to online transactions. Therefore, understanding specific digital factors influencing purchasing decisions, such as online customer reviews, viral marketing, and shopping convenience is essential for platform sustainability.

Amidst this rapid growth, platforms face critical trust boundaries. The abundance of manipulated reviews makes it difficult for consumers to distinguish authentic feedback, where review manipulation significantly dampens consumer attitude toward the brand. Furthermore, viral content that does not align with consumer expectations can lead to dissatisfaction and erode brand loyalty. To address these challenges, this study framework is built upon the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB). Within this digital context, Online Customer Reviews act as Subjective Norms that pressure or encourage behavioral intent, whereas Shopping Convenience operates as Perceived Behavioral Control, reflecting the ease or difficulty consumers experience when navigating transactions.

Various studies have been conducted to address the challenges in understanding consumer behavior in e-commerce, particularly in the digital context. Research by Arianthi (2022) shows that online customer reviews, viral marketing, and price perception significantly influence purchasing decisions on Shopee. Wang et al. (2023) found that when consumers suspect manipulation in reviews, they tend to discredit the entire rating system, ultimately reducing their attitude toward the brand and their likelihood of making a purchase. Additionally, viral marketing strategies are often perceived as excessive or misleading, which can lead to negative perceptions of the product. A study by Hong et al. (2023) revealed that viral content that does not align with consumer expectations may trigger dissatisfaction, erode

loyalty, and lower purchase intention. A recurring issue in these studies is the limited number of investigations that examine these three variables simultaneously, as well as the lack of empirical approaches that consider the demographic profiles and characteristics of Shopee users comprehensively. Therefore, further research is needed to provide a more comprehensive understanding of how digital factors influence purchasing decisions on Shopee.

Previous studies have shown mixed results regarding the influence of digital factors on purchasing decisions. Most research supports the notion that online customer reviews, viral marketing, and ease of shopping have a significant positive impact on consumer purchasing decisions. Arianthi (2022) found that customer reviews and viral content can increase consumer trust and purchase interest. Similar findings were presented by Chandra and Wahyuni (2023), who revealed that the credibility of online reviews strengthens consumer trust in products offered through digital platforms. Furthermore, a study by Prasetya et al. (2024) highlighted that ease of navigation and transaction processes in e-commerce significantly enhance purchase intention. A recent study by Lestari and Gunawan (2023) noted that consumer expectations shaped by unrealistic viral marketing may reduce post-purchase satisfaction. These contradictions indicate that the effectiveness of such factors heavily depends on user context, the quality of information, and actual consumer experience, thus requiring further comprehensive and data-driven research. Thus, this study aims to provide a data-based empirical basis on how online customer reviews, viral marketing, and shopping convenience influence consumer purchasing decisions on Shopee, particularly analyzing the moderating role of gender to help e-commerce players in creating targeted retail strategies.

To address these issues, this study aims to provide a deeper understanding of the influence of online customer reviews, viral marketing, and ease of shopping on consumer purchasing decisions on Shopee. The research seeks to present empirical data that can serve as a foundation for e-commerce players in designing more targeted and trustworthy digital strategies. Furthermore, the findings of this study are expected to encourage platforms like Shopee to enhance review transparency and simplify transaction processes in order to create a safe and convenient shopping experience. This research may also serve as a reference for regulators in formulating evidence-based consumer protection policies. In doing so, the e-commerce ecosystem can grow in a healthy, sustainable manner with a strong focus on user satisfaction.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Online Customer Review

Online customer review are one of the key factors influencing consumer purchasing decisions. An online customer review refers to feedback provided by internet users who have previously made online purchases. These reviews offer information about a product, which consumers can then analyze before deciding whether or not to proceed with a purchase. Online customer reviews serve as a decision-making tool for consumers, acting as both a feedback mechanism and a recommendation system available on digital platforms. Several researchers define online customer reviews as evaluations or assessments provided by consumers regarding products or services through online platforms. These reviews function as valuable sources of information for potential buyers and can significantly impact their purchase decisions. According to Munika Afrilia and Sidanti (2023), "Online customer reviews are evaluations provided by consumers containing information about various aspects of a product. Through these reviews, consumers can assess product quality based on the experiences and opinions shared by previous buyers." Hartanto and Indriyani (2022) also emphasize the importance of online reviews as a means of gaining insight into a product's performance and reliability.

2.2 Viral Marketing

Viral marketing is also defined by experts as a marketing strategy that leverages social networks and digital platforms to spread marketing messages exponentially, much like the spread of a virus. Viral marketing is considered the digital version of word-of-mouth marketing, involving the creation and distribution of videos, advertisements, and other marketing content online that spreads virally, prompting customers to explore the product or share the content with their peers. According to Briefer (2024), "Viral marketing is a strategy in which a brand creates a 'viral' phenomenon from its product or service, allowing it to reach a wider audience in a short period of time." Yoesoep Edhie Rachmad et al. (2024) also explain, "Viral marketing is a strategy for disseminating messages exponentially through social networks, which can be measured using four indicators: Emotion, Valence, Arousal (emotional activation), and Utility."

2.3 Shopping Convenience

Shopping convenience refers to the extent to which the process of purchasing goods or services can be carried out easily, quickly, comfortably, and without obstacles by consumers. In the context of digital platforms or e-commerce, such as Shopee, shopping convenience encompasses various aspects, including the ease of finding products, intuitive app navigation, efficient payment processes, and fast delivery services. According to Khairial and Ridanasti (2023), online shopping convenience creates a positive experience for consumers, which can enhance satisfaction and encourage repeat purchases. They emphasize that "shopping convenience plays a significant role in influencing customer satisfaction and behavioral intention, particularly in digital retail platforms." Meanwhile, Chakraborty (2024) found that younger generations highly prioritize convenience when shopping online, including ease of navigation, quick access, and a simplified checkout process.

2.4 Purchase decision

Purchase decision is the process undertaken by consumers before ultimately deciding to buy a product or service. According to Andrian (2022), "A purchase decision is the process of making a decision about a product, in which an individual considers various options and then decides what to buy." Indriyati (2023) explains that "A purchase decision is the choice made by consumers in distinguishing a product, beginning with an awareness of the need and desire for fulfillment. Essentially, consumers have only two options when making a purchase decision: to buy or not to buy." A purchase decision involves the evaluation of various available alternatives and the selection of a product from among many choices.

2.5 Gender

Gender is a social construct that differentiates roles, behaviors, responsibilities, and identities between men and women in society (Connell, 2022). Unlike sex, which is biological in nature, gender relates to social and cultural norms that shape expectations toward individuals based on their biological sex. In the context of consumer behavior, gender plays a significant role in influencing how individuals process information, make purchasing decisions, and respond to marketing strategies. According to Kotler and Keller (2023), gender differences often create variations in product preferences, shopping styles, and levels of trust in brands. Men tend to be more rational and function-oriented when shopping, while women are more emotional and consider aesthetic and social aspects. This is in line with the opinion of Rahmawati et al. (2022), who stated that gender differences can shape consumer preferences toward promotions and advertisements differently. In addition, gender also acts as a moderating variable in various marketing studies. Nugroho and Pratiwi (2023) found that gender moderates the relationship between viral marketing and purchase intention, where men and women have different levels of sensitivity to marketing messages. Sari and Hidayat (2024) also emphasized that perceptions of convenience and trust in online shopping are influenced by gender, so e-commerce strategies need to be tailored to the gender-specific characteristics of consumers.

2.6 Hypotheses Development**2.6.1 The Influence of Online Customer Review on Purchase Decisions**

Online customer reviews (OCR) are a form of electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM) that have a strong influence on consumer trust and purchase decisions. Reviews that are informative, relevant, and delivered by fellow users tend to increase consumers' purchase intentions. When consumers read positive reviews from previous buyers, they feel more confident about the product's quality and are more likely to make a purchase decision (Gunawan, 2022). A study by Khairial & Ridanasti (2023) revealed that online reviews significantly enhance customer satisfaction and purchase intention, particularly when the reviews come from credible consumers. Meanwhile, research conducted by Bogdan et al. (2025) found that the quality and trustworthiness of OCR indirectly affect purchase decisions through perceived risk and emotional response. Therefore, the hypothesis proposed is:

H1: Online customer review have a positive effect on purchase decisions.

2.6.2 The Influence of Viral Marketing on Purchase Decisions

Viral marketing is a promotional strategy that utilizes the exponential spread of messages through social media and digital platforms. According to Rachmad et al. (2024), elements such as emotional engagement, social connectedness, and the functional value of viral content can influence consumers' perceptions of a product, ultimately affecting their purchase decisions. A study by Astuti & Gunawan (2023) shows that viral content containing elements of entertainment and authenticity significantly triggers consumer attention and purchase interest, especially among the younger generation. Meanwhile, research by Wijaya et al. (2022) emphasizes that the intensity of viral content dissemination through influencers strengthens brand awareness and increases purchase conversions, as consumers tend to trust social recommendations more than traditional advertisements. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H2: Viral marketing has a positive effect on purchase decisions

2.6.3 The Influence of Shopping Convenience on Purchase Decisions

Perceived shopping convenience includes the ease of navigating the platform, searching for and comparing products, making payment transactions, and receiving goods quickly. According to Khairial & Ridanasti (2023), this convenience significantly increases customer satisfaction and drives purchase decisions. When the shopping process feels easy and efficient, consumers feel more comfortable and are more likely to make immediate purchase decisions. A study by Putri & Yuliana (2024) found that an intuitive app interface, flexible payment methods, and a simple checkout process enhance the shopping experience and accelerate online purchase decisions. In addition, Alfian & Nurdin (2022) emphasized that the perception of ease in accessing online stores and completing purchases positively affects purchase intention and conversion. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H3: Shopping convenience has a positive effect on purchase decisions

2.6.4 The Moderating Role of Gender in the Relationship Between Online Customer Reviews, Viral Marketing, and Shopping Convenience on Purchase Decisions.

Gender as a moderating variable plays an important role in understanding the differences in consumer behavior during the purchase decision-making process. Gender can influence how individuals interpret information, respond to marketing stimuli, and make decisions based on personal preferences and values. According to Al-Adwan et al. (2024), the effectiveness of digital marketing strategies, including viral marketing and customer reviews, greatly depends on demographic characteristics, including gender. They found that marketing content tailored to gender perceptions has a stronger impact on purchase decisions. Thus, it can be concluded that gender can strengthen or weaken the influence of online customer reviews (OCR), viral marketing, and shopping convenience on purchase decisions. Therefore, it is essential for digital marketers to consider gender-based segmentation when designing their communication strategies.

H4a: Gender moderates the influence of Online Customer Review on Online Purchase Decisions.

H5b: Gender moderates the influence of Viral Marketing on Online Purchase Decisions.

H6c: Gender moderates the influence of Shopping Convenience on Online Purchase Decisions.

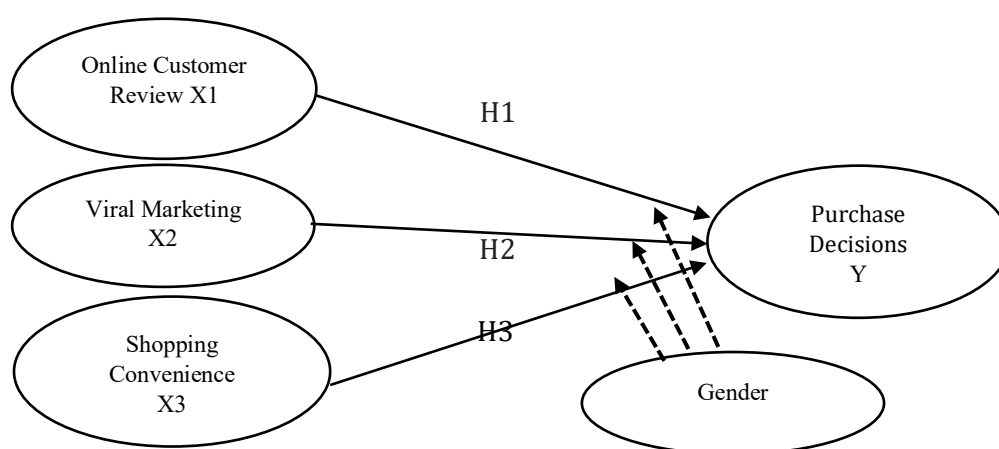


Figure 1: Research Model

3. METODOLOGI

3.1 Research Design

This study employs a quantitative approach using a survey method to analyze the influence of online customer reviews, viral marketing, and shopping convenience on purchase decisions on Shopee, while also considering gender as a moderating variable. The research was conducted on consumers who have made at least one purchase on Shopee, using purposive sampling, meaning respondents were selected based on the criterion that they have used Shopee at least once. A total of 103 respondents were used as the sample, which is considered sufficient for multivariate analysis and meets the statistical test requirements (Hair et al., 2020). Moderation hypothesis testing was conducted using Baron and Kenny's (1986) moderation regression analysis method, implemented through IBM SPSS software (Ghozali, 2021). This method allows researchers to identify whether and how the moderating variable (gender) strengthens or weakens the relationship between the independent variables (online customer reviews, viral marketing, and shopping convenience) and the dependent variable (purchase decision). The research was carried out between April and June 2025, with the aim of producing valid and reliable findings, in accordance with the recommendations of Creswell and Creswell (2023).

3.2 Research Instrument

The research instrument used in this study is a questionnaire developed based on indicators of each variable: online customer review, viral marketing, shopping convenience, and purchase decision. The questionnaire uses a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from "strongly disagree" (1) to "strongly agree" (5), to measure respondents' perceptions of each statement. Each variable consists of several statement items developed from relevant theories and previous research findings. Before being widely distributed, the instrument was pre-tested through validity and reliability testing to ensure that the items accurately and consistently measure the intended variables. The validity test results showed that all items had correlation values that met the required criteria, and the reliability test produced Cronbach's Alpha values greater than 0.6, indicating that the instrument is reliable.

3.3 Population

The population in this study consists of all active users of the Shopee platform in Indonesia who have made online purchases for at least the past three months. These users were selected because they are considered to have sufficient experience in evaluating service quality, reading customer reviews, being exposed to viral marketing, and experiencing the convenience of shopping on the platform. The active Shopee users referred to in this study represent various age groups, genders, occupations, and shopping frequencies, particularly those in the millennial and Generation Z age groups (17–35 years old), as this demographic constitutes the largest segment of e-commerce users in Indonesia (APJII, 2023).

3.4 Sample

The sample in this study is a part of the population of active Shopee users in Indonesia who meet certain criteria. The sampling technique used is purposive sampling, which is a method of selecting samples based on specific considerations or criteria relevant to the research objectives. The criteria used include: (1) active Shopee users who have made purchases within the last three months, (2) aged between 17–35 years (representing the Millennial and Generation Z groups), and (3) willing to complete the research questionnaire in full. This sample size complies with the statistical guidelines established by Hair et al. (2020), which require a minimum sample size of 5 to 10 times the total number of questionnaire indicator items used in the instrument. With 19 total indicator items across all operational variables in this study, the requirement ranges between 95 and 190 respondents; thus, the 103 collected responses are statistically valid and sufficient for multivariate regression modeling.

3.5 Moderating Effect

Moderation effect refers to a condition in which the relationship between an independent variable (X) and a dependent variable (Y) is influenced by a third variable, known as the moderator variable (M). The moderator variable does not directly affect Y but rather influences the strength or direction of the relationship between X and Y. In other words, when the value of the moderator changes, the effect of X on Y also changes it may become stronger, weaker, or even insignificant. According to Prayitno and Utami (2023), “a moderator variable plays a role in clarifying or weakening the relationship between variables in a research model, thereby helping researchers understand when and under what conditions the relationship becomes significant.” In other words, a moderator adds context to the effect of X on Y. This is also supported by Ghazali and Latan (2023), who state that “the interaction between the independent variable and the moderator must be tested to determine whether the moderator strengthens or weakens the influence of the independent variable on the dependent variable, as indicated by the significance of the interaction coefficient.” In other words, the presence of interaction in a moderation model is the core of moderation testing itself.

4. RESULTS

4.1 Demographic Characteristics

Table 1 presents the demographic characteristics of 103 Shopee users, showing a diverse respondent profile. The majority of respondents are female (75.7%), and the largest age distribution falls within the 17–24 age group (62.1%), reflecting the active participation of the youth segment.

Table 1.
Demographic Characteristics

Profile	N	%
Gender		
Female	78	75,7
Male	23	24,3
Total	103	100
Age		
17 – 24 Years	64	62,1
25 – 34 Years	37	35,9
35 – 44 Years	2	1,9
45 Years and above	0	0
Total	103	100
Occupation		
Student	58	56,3
Entrepreneur	4	3,9
Government Employee	13	12,6
Private Sector Employee	27	26,2
Total	103	100
Income level		
< Rp 1.000,000	20	19,4
Rp 1.000,000 – 2.500,000	58	56,3
Rp 2.500,000 – 4,000.000	15	14,6
>Rp 4.000,000	10	9,7

Total	103	100
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Source: Data Processing, 2025

4.2 Validity and Reability

Table 2. Furthermore, all variables are deemed reliable with Cronbach's Alpha values above 0.60 (Pallant, 2020), exhibiting 0.846 for Online Customer Reviews, 0.847 for Viral Marketing, 0.846 for Shopping Convenience, and 0.854 for Purchase Decisions. This indicates that the instruments used are consistent and stable in collecting data, making the results trustworthy.

Table 2.
Validity and Reability Test

Variable	Items	Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha
Online Customer Reviews	X.1	0,359	0.846
	X.2	0.446	
	X.3	0.412	
	X.4	0.436	
	X.5	0.477	
Viral Marketing	X.1	0.497	0.847
	X.2	0.350	
	X.3	0.531	
	X.4	0.312	
	X.5	0.435	
Shopping Convenience	X.1	0.489	0.846
	X.2	0.546	
	X.3	0.393	
Purchase Decisions	X.4	0.457	0.854
	X.5	0.456	
	Y.1	0.322	
	Y.2	0.426	
	Y.3	0.541	
	Y.4	0.599	
	Y.5	0.300	

Source: Data Processing, 2025

4.3 Normality Test

Table 3 presents the results of the normality test using the One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test for the research data. With a sample size (N) of 103, the test result shows an Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) value of 0.089. Since this significance value is greater than the significance level of 0.05 ($p > 0.05$), it can be concluded that the research data are normally distributed (Ghozali, 2021; Hair et al., 2020). Data normality is one of the essential assumptions in parametric regression analysis, ensuring that the statistical model used produces unbiased and efficient estimates, thus making the research findings more valid and reliable (Pallant, 2020).

Table 3.
Normality Test

N		103
Normal Parameters ^{a,b}	Mean	0
	Std. Deviation	0.43018151
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	0.082
	Positive	0.082
	Negative	-0.047
Test Statistic		0.082
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) ^c		.089
Monte Carlo Sig. (2-tailed) ^d	Sig.	0.089
95% Confidence Interval	Lower Bound	0.083
	Upper Bound	0.094

Source: Data Processing, 2025

4.4 Multicollinearity

The multicollinearity test was conducted to determine whether there is a correlation among the independent variables. The table below shows no indication of multicollinearity for all variables, as indicated by VIF values below 10 and tolerance values above 0.01 (Sugiyono, 2020). This indicates that the variables are suitable for use in this study.

Table 4.
Multicollinearity Test

Model		Collinearity Statistics				
		Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)		3.221	.002		
	Online Customer Reviews	.206	1.914	.059	.699	1.430
	Viral Marketing	.181	1.632	.106	.653	1.531
	Shopping Convenience	.179	1.782	.078	.797	1.254

Source: Data Processing, 2025

4.5 Autocorrelation Test

The autocorrelation test was conducted to determine whether there is a correlation and similarity between different time points in the sample data (Sugiyono, 2020). The acceptable range for the Durbin-Watson test is between 1.5 and 2.5, where a value closer to 2 indicates a lower level of autocorrelation (Turner, 2020). The Durbin-Watson value for this study is 1.607, indicating no presence of autocorrelation. Therefore, the data can be considered suitable for this research.

Table 5.
Autocorrelation Test

Model	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.44491	1.607

Source: Data Processing, 2025

4.6 Heteroscedasticity Test

The heteroscedasticity test was conducted to determine whether the sample data exhibits constant variance or shows high variation. This study employed the Glejser test to assess heteroscedasticity, using a 0.05 threshold to determine its presence (Sugiyono, 2020). All values in the Sig. column are above 0.05, indicating the absence of heteroscedasticity. The absence of heteroscedasticity suggests that the data is appropriate for use in this study.

Table 6.
Heteroscedasticity Test

Model		Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)		-.170	.865
	Online Customer Reviews	.172	.456	.149
	Viral Marketing	.007	.055	.956
	Shopping Convenience	.011	-.100	.920

a. Dependent Variable: Purchase Decision

Source: Data Processing, 2025

4.7 F-Test

The F-test is a statistical test used to compare the variances of two samples or the ratio of variances among multiple samples. The threshold used for the F-test is 0.05, where a Sig. value below 0.05 indicates that all independent variables collectively influence the dependent variable (Sugiyono, 2020). The table below shows that the F-test value is 8.278, indicating that all independent variables in this study collectively have an effect on the dependent variable.

Table 7.
F-Test

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	4.916	3	1.639	8.278	.000 ^b
	Residual	19.597	99	.198		
	Total	24.513	102			

a. Dependent Variable: Purchase Decision

b. Predictors: (Constant), Online Customer Reviews, Viral Marketing, Shopping Convenience

Source: Data Processing, 2025

4.8 T-Test

The t-test is used to determine the partial effect of each independent variable on the dependent variable. The threshold used for this partial test is a significance value (Sig.) below 0.05. If the Sig. value is lower than 0.05, it indicates that the specific independent variable partially exerts a significant influence on consumer purchase decisions on Shopee.

Table 8.
T-Test

Model		Unstandardized B	Coefficients Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	.570	.487		.221	
	Online Customer Reviews	.237	.124	.206	.914	.059
	Viral Marketing	.203	.124	.181	.632	.106
	Shopping Convenience	.181	.102	.179	.782	.078

a. Dependent Variable: Purchase Decision

Source: Data Processing, 2025

4.9 R² Test

The R² test is used to determine the extent to which independent variables influence the dependent variable. The R² value ranges from 0 to 1, where a higher R² value indicates a greater influence of the independent variables on the dependent variable (Sugiyono, 2020).

Table 9.
R² Test

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.448 ^a	.201	.176	.44491

Source: Data Processing, 2025

4.10 Hypothesis Testing

Tabel 10.
Hypothesis Testing

Variable	Unstandardized Coefficients (B)	t	Sig.	Decision
(Constant)	2.295	1.589	.002	Significant
Online Customer Reviews	0.237	1.914	.003	Significant
Viral Marketing	0.203	1.632	.106	Not Significant
Shopping Convenience	0.181	1.782	.000	Significant
Gender as Moderator	0.071	1.155	.025	Significant

Description:

Number of observations = 103

Dependent Variable: Purchase Decision

The regression test results in Table 10 show that Online Customer Reviews (Sig. = 0.003) and Shopping Convenience (Sig. < 0.001) have a positive and significant partial effect on Purchase Decisions on Shopee. Meanwhile, Viral Marketing does not have a significant influence (Sig. = 0.106). Crucially, the moderating variable interaction (Gender) shows a significance value of 0.025, which is below the 0.05 threshold. This statistically proves that gender significantly acts as a moderating variable that conditions the strength of digital marketing factors on consumer purchase decisions.

5. DISCUSSION

This study thoroughly examines the relationship between online customer reviews, viral marketing, and shopping convenience on consumers' purchase decisions on Shopee, focusing on how these three factors influence consumer behavior in the e-commerce context. The partial t-test results show that online customer reviews have a positive and significant effect on purchase decisions. With a regression coefficient (B) of 0.237 and a significance value of 0.003 ($p < 0.05$), this finding confirms that the higher the level of consumer trust and positive perception toward online product reviews, the more likely they are to make a purchase decision. This result aligns with the findings of Kim & Lee (2022) and Park et al. (2023), who stated that informative and credible customer reviews enhance the perceived value and consumer confidence in the product being offered. Online reviews are considered a form of electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM) that strongly influences the alternative evaluation process before making a purchase (Wang et al., 2024).

Viral marketing was found to have no significant effect on purchase decisions, with a regression coefficient (B) of 0.203 and a significance value of 0.106. This suggests that while viral strategies can generate high exposure, they do not necessarily lead to purchase decisions unless supported by relevant and trustworthy content. Hong et al. (2023) pointed out that viral content that is unconvincing or lacks relevance tends to fail in driving purchase intention, as it does not effectively build brand value or form a positive perception in the consumer's mind. Thus, the success of viral marketing in influencing purchase decisions greatly depends on how well the disseminated content provides relevance, credibility, and emotional appeal capable of triggering real consumer actions.

The study also found that shopping convenience has a positive and significant effect on purchase decisions on Shopee (B = 0.181; $p < 0.001$), supported by several recent studies. According to Mongol, Walandouw, and Walewangko (2023), ease of use in the Shopee application positively influences consumer purchase decisions. When users perceive that navigation and transaction processes on the platform run smoothly and efficiently, they are more likely to proceed to the purchase stage.

The interaction analysis results demonstrate that gender significantly moderates the effects of digital marketing elements on Shopee purchase decisions (Sig. = 0.025). Based on consumer psychology behavior, women tend to lean heavily on Subjective Norms such as Online Customer Reviews due to a higher emotional and social orientation in risk reduction. Conversely, male consumers are often highly functional and utility-driven, placing greater weight on Perceived Behavioral Control factors like Shopping Convenience, such as seamless application navigation and direct checkout speeds. This evidence reinforces the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) applications in digital environments, proving that gender serves as an environmental boundary conditions that accentuates or limits how external convenience and social proofs turn into final spending behaviors.

6. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that within the framework of the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), online customer reviews (subjective norms) and shopping convenience (perceived behavioral control) significantly drive consumer purchase decisions on Shopee. In contrast, viral marketing strategies fail to partially trigger conversion actions unless supported by relevant baseline content value. Furthermore, gender is empirically proven to be a significant moderating variable in this ecosystem. The structural impact of platform convenience and social review trust is deeply bound to the psychological orientations of male and female users. Therefore, e-commerce practitioners must discard unisex or generic marketing styles and actively focus on demographic gender-based optimization to build efficient and tailored purchase conversions.

7. LIMITATION AND FUTURE RESEARCH

This study has several limitations that should be considered when interpreting the results. First, the scope of the research is limited to a single e-commerce platform, namely Shopee, so the findings may not be fully generalizable to other e-commerce platforms such as Tokopedia, Lazada, or TikTok Shop, which have different user characteristics and platform features. Second, the data used in this study were collected through a quantitative approach using a cross-sectional survey, which may be influenced by respondents' temporary perceptions or situational bias at the time of data collection. Third, the use of gender as a moderating variable only includes binary classification (male and female), whereas in practice, consumer preferences may be influenced by more complex gender identities and other demographic variables such as age, education level, and online shopping experience. For future research, it is recommended to explore other potential moderating variables such as age, purchase frequency, customer loyalty, or digital literacy level, which may strengthen or weaken the influence of independent variables on purchase decisions. By expanding the scope and methodology, future studies are expected to provide broader and more applicable insights for e-commerce players in designing more personalized and effective marketing strategies.

8. THEORETICAL

8.1 Theoretical implications

This study provides a significant theoretical contribution to the field of digital consumer behavior and online marketing, particularly in understanding how online customer reviews, viral marketing, and shopping convenience influence consumer purchase decisions on Shopee. The findings support modern consumer behavior theory, which states that purchase decisions are heavily influenced by rapidly disseminated external information and perceptions of transaction ease (Kotler & Keller, 2022). Furthermore, Khairial and Ridanasti (2023) emphasize that the convenience of the online shopping process, from easy navigation to transaction speed significantly contributes to driving purchase decisions. However, the finding that these variables do not show a significant effect in certain contexts indicates that these factors do not always work synergistically. This aligns with the view of Park and Yi (2022), who suggest that the effects of digital marketing variables can vary depending on exposure intensity, social context, and consumer characteristics. Thus, these findings highlight the need for a more holistic and context-based approach in examining the influence of digital elements on consumer behavior.

8.2 Practical implications

The results of this study provide valuable insights for online business practitioners, particularly sellers and store managers on Shopee. To enhance consumer purchase decisions, business actors need to actively manage customer reviews, develop relevant and credible viral marketing strategies, and ensure a shopping process that is easy, fast, and user-friendly. According to Nugroho et al. (2024), customer experience-based marketing campaigns combined with positive reviews and genuine testimonials from previous buyers can increase the trust of new consumers. In addition, business actors are encouraged to utilize Shopee features such as Shopee Live, Shopee Feed, and Vouchers to support viral marketing strategies that align with current digital trends. Shopee management and government bodies can also play a role by providing data-driven digital marketing training and supporting review verification systems to ensure that the information received by consumers is more accurate and trustworthy.

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