Community Engagement & Emergence Journal
Volume 6 Nomor 6, Tahun 2025
Halaman : 5207-5218

From Likes to Buys: The Influence of Social Media on Online Purchasing Decisions and Its Implications for Digital Consumer Education

Muhammad Luthfi Hamzah [a], M. Afdal [b], Frendi Ardiansyah [c], Astri Ayu Purwati [d], Tilovmurodov Dostonbek Furqat ugli [e]

Economic Education Department , Universitas Islam Negeri Sultan Syarif Kasim Riau, Pekanbaru, Indonesia[a]
Information System Department, Universitas Islam Negeri Sultan Syarif Kasim Riau, Pekanbaru, Indonesia[b,c]
Management Department, Institut Bisnis dan Teknologi Pelita Indonesia, Pekanbaru, Indonesia[d]
Department of International Tourism Management, Alfraganus University, Tashkent, Uzbekistan[e]
muhammad.luthfi@uin-suska.ac.id

Abstract

This study aims to examine the influence of social media on online shopping behavior among the people of Pekanbaru. Social media has become a highly influential platform in everyday life, serving not only as a means of communication but also as a powerful marketing tool. Using a quantitative approach, data were collected through questionnaires distributed to 100 respondents. The study investigates several social media factors that affect purchasing decisions, including online community, interaction, accessibility, credibility, and content sharing. The results of hypothesis testing indicate that online community and content sharing significantly influence purchasing decisions, while other variables show statistically insignificant effects. These findings highlight the critical role of e-commerce and marketing practitioners in optimizing social media utilization, particularly in fostering transparency, credibility, and effective engagement with audiences. This research provides both theoretical and practical contributions to digital marketing strategies in Indonesia, emphasizing the need for more targeted approaches to enhance consumer interest and purchasing decisions in the digital era.

Keywords : *Accessibility, Content Sharing, Credibility, E-commerce, Interaction, Online Community, Purchase Decision, Social Media.*

1. Introduction

In the current digital era, social media has emerged as one of the most transformative forces in global communication and consumer interaction. The widespread adoption of platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and X (formerly Twitter) has not only revolutionized how individuals connect and share information but also reshaped how businesses interact with their customers. Social media provides an interactive and real-time space where users can exchange opinions, discover products, and engage with brands more intimately than through traditional media channels. In Indonesia, this phenomenon is particularly notable, as more than 78% of the population actively uses social media (Mabkhot & Isa, 2022). With diverse platforms catering to different user preferences and needs (Pratama et al., 2020), social media has become deeply embedded in daily life and now represents a central element of modern consumer culture (Azzaakiyyah, 2023). Its evolution from a communication tool into a commercial ecosystem marks a major shift in how consumers perceive, evaluate, and purchase products online (Unnava, 2021).

The exponential growth of e-commerce has further strengthened the connection between social media and consumer purchasing behavior. In Indonesia, platforms such as Shopee, Tokopedia, and Lazada have become dominant players in the retail market, capitalizing on social media marketing to reach and engage millions of customers. The integration of marketing and commerce through social media—often referred to as "social commerce"—allows consumers to discover, review, and purchase products within a single digital environment. This seamless

e-ISSN:2715-9752, p-ISSN:2715-9868
Copyright © 2025 THE AUTHOR(S). This article is distributed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International license

interaction between social media and online marketplaces has blurred the boundaries between entertainment and shopping, creating a dynamic in which consumers are constantly exposed to brand messages, influencer recommendations, and peer reviews. While this convergence provides tremendous opportunities for businesses to expand their market reach, it also introduces challenges related to maintaining consumer trust, ensuring authenticity, and managing the credibility of online information.

One of the most influential aspects of social media in shaping consumer behavior is user-generated content (UGC). UGC refers to product reviews, photos, testimonials, and videos created by users who have purchased or experienced a product (Hazari et al., 2016). This form of content has gained prominence because it is perceived as more genuine, unbiased, and relatable compared to traditional advertisements. Studies have shown that consumers are more likely to trust information shared by fellow users than messages directly produced by brands (H. Wang et al., 2018; Geng & Chen, 2021). UGC serves as a powerful tool for reducing uncertainty in purchasing decisions, especially in online environments where physical product evaluation is impossible. Furthermore, social media enables two-way interaction between brands and consumers, fostering engagement, trust, and loyalty (Alalwan et al., 2024). In localized contexts such as Pekanbaru, these interactions often reflect community values and cultural familiarity, which can significantly influence consumer perceptions and purchase intentions.

Social media content also plays a vital role in driving consumer engagement and decision-making. Platforms such as Instagram and Facebook empower users and brands to share visually appealing and informative posts that increase brand visibility and emotional connection with audiences (Li et al., 2016; Dabbous & Barakat, 2020). Businesses leverage storytelling, influencer marketing, and video-based promotions to capture attention and strengthen their brand identity (Boon et al., 2015; Zhang, 2022). Well-crafted content not only enhances brand awareness but also fosters a sense of belonging and trust among potential customers. However, the same openness that allows anyone to publish information also creates risks—such as misleading advertisements, fake reviews, or cases of online fraud—that threaten consumer confidence. These challenges underscore the need for transparency, credibility, and ethical communication practices in social media marketing to maintain long-term consumer trust.

Another dimension influencing online shopping behavior is the diversity of social media platforms and the distinct characteristics of their users. Each platform appeals to different demographic segments and communication styles: Instagram emphasizes visual storytelling for younger audiences, Facebook caters to a broad and diverse user base, and TikTok uses creative short-form videos that blend entertainment with product promotion. For e-commerce companies, this diversity presents both opportunities and complexities. Marketing strategies that succeed on one platform may not necessarily work on another. According to Busalim et al. (2021), adapting marketing approaches to align with platform-specific cultures and user behaviors is crucial to achieving optimal engagement. In the context of Pekanbaru, where local traditions and community relationships remain strong, e-commerce firms that collaborate with local influencers and tailor their messages to resonate with regional values may gain a significant competitive edge.

Although numerous studies have explored the influence of social media on consumer behavior, most have focused on global or metropolitan settings, often neglecting the contextual differences in smaller urban areas. There remains a noticeable research gap in understanding how social media affects online shopping behavior in mid-sized Indonesian cities such as Pekanbaru. Local cultural norms, purchasing habits, and digital literacy levels may moderate how consumers respond to social media marketing strategies. Moreover, the limited number of region-specific studies restricts the ability of e-commerce businesses to design marketing campaigns that effectively target local audiences. Thus, there is a pressing need for research that explores these dynamics within the unique sociocultural framework of Pekanbaru to provide a more comprehensive understanding of how social media influences online consumer behavior.

The novelty of this study lies in its holistic examination of multiple social media dimensions—interaction, content sharing, accessibility, and credibility—and their combined impact on online shopping behavior within a localized Indonesian context. Unlike previous studies that analyzed these variables separately, this research integrates them into a single framework to explore how they interact and collectively shape consumer purchase intentions. By emphasizing the context of Pekanbaru, this study also offers insights into the digital behaviors of consumers outside Indonesia's major cities, contributing to a more diverse and inclusive understanding of social commerce in emerging markets. This localized perspective provides new theoretical contributions to the field of digital marketing and offers empirical evidence relevant to developing countries experiencing rapid digital transformation.

Therefore, the primary objective of this research is to analyze the influence of social media on online shopping behavior among consumers in Pekanbaru. Specifically, the study seeks to identify which factors—such as interaction, content sharing, accessibility, and credibility—most strongly affect consumers' purchase intentions and decisions. The findings are expected to contribute both theoretically and practically: theoretically, by enriching the literature on digital consumer behavior and the psychology of online purchasing; and practically, by offering actionable recommendations for e-commerce practitioners to enhance their social media strategies, strengthen customer relationships, and sustain competitiveness in an increasingly digitalized marketplace. Through this research, it is anticipated that e-commerce businesses can better leverage the power of social media to foster trust, engagement, and long-term success in the evolving digital economy.

2. Literature Review

Purchase Decisions

Purchase decisions represent the culmination of consumers' cognitive and emotional evaluations of available products and alternatives. Hasan and Sohail (2020) describe consumer purchasing decisions as a series of interrelated judgments regarding product type, brand choice, quantity, timing, and payment method. In the digital marketplace, social media significantly affects these decision processes by providing product information, peer reviews, and influencer recommendations that shape consumer perceptions and preferences. According to Lăzăroiu et al. (2020), understanding consumer decision-making in the context of social media is essential for companies seeking to design effective digital marketing strategies. Furthermore, Hajli et al. (2017) emphasize that purchasing is not a single action but rather a multidimensional process influenced by social, psychological, and contextual factors. As such, companies that leverage social media effectively can influence not only the final purchase decision but also earlier stages of the consumer journey, including awareness, interest, and evaluation.

Online Community

The concept of an online community plays a crucial role in shaping a company's brand identity and strengthening customer relationships in the digital era. Online communities are groups of individuals who interact through digital platforms to share experiences, opinions, and knowledge about specific interests or products. The active participation of customers in these online spaces generates a sense of belonging and trust, allowing companies to build authentic brand-consumer relationships. According to Hajli et al. (2017), online communities contribute significantly to brand development, as customers who participate tend to provide positive feedback and create favorable word-of-mouth that enhances brand equity. The collaborative nature of online communities also fosters engagement, which strengthens consumers' emotional attachment to the brand and influences their behavioral intentions, including purchase decisions. This study proposes that the presence and strength of online communities not only

enhance social media performance but also positively affect consumer purchasing behavior. Therefore, the hypotheses formulated are:
H1a: Online Community has a positive effect on Social Media.
H1b: Online Community has a positive effect on Purchasing Decisions.

Interaction
Social interaction is another key determinant of consumer engagement and purchasing behavior on social media platforms. Rooted in Social Exchange Theory, interaction is viewed as an exchange of valuable information that creates mutual benefits for participants (Wu & Hsu, 2016). Frequent and meaningful interactions between consumers and brands—such as comments, direct messages, or live sessions—help build trust and foster stronger relationships. Razak et al. (2016) emphasize that social interaction, both online and offline, facilitates information exchange and positively influences purchase intentions. On social media, this interaction often takes the form of discussions, feedback, and user-generated conversations that help potential buyers make informed decisions. In e-commerce, interaction serves as a bridge between brand communication and consumer trust, where positive engagement can enhance purchase likelihood. Thus, interaction is hypothesized to strengthen both social media dynamics and purchasing decisions.
H2a: Interaction has a positive effect on Social Media.
H2b: Interaction has a positive effect on Purchasing Decisions.

Sharing of Content
Content sharing is a central mechanism in social media marketing and a vital component of brand communication strategies. Through sharing capabilities, companies can distribute promotional materials, educational information, or user-generated posts that stimulate consumer interest. Beig and Khan (2018) highlight that brand content with clear messaging and interactive features tends to generate higher engagement and a more positive consumer experience. When users share content voluntarily, it amplifies message reach and authenticity, as peers are perceived as more trustworthy than direct brand communications. This process creates a viral effect, where shared posts contribute to brand awareness and influence others' purchase intentions. Therefore, content sharing functions as both a promotional tool and a form of electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM), which can directly or indirectly affect consumer decision-making. Based on this rationale, the following hypotheses are proposed:
H3a: Content Sharing has a positive effect on Social Media.
H3b: Content Sharing has a positive effect on Purchasing Decisions.

Accessibility
Accessibility refers to the ease with which users can obtain information, interact with brands, and perform transactions through social media platforms. When companies effectively use social media for marketing, communication, and customer service, they improve accessibility and customer engagement (Tajudeen et al., 2018; Riaz et al., 2021). High accessibility allows consumers to quickly obtain product information, compare options, and interact with sellers without geographical constraints. This convenience increases user satisfaction and strengthens their trust in online platforms. Moreover, the ability to access brands anytime and anywhere enhances the efficiency of consumer decision-making processes, making social media an integral part of e-commerce ecosystems. From an organizational perspective, greater accessibility also means better feedback loops, enabling businesses to respond promptly to customer needs. Hence, this study suggests that accessibility contributes positively to the effectiveness of social media and consumers' purchasing decisions.
H4a: Accessibility has a positive effect on Social Media.
H4b: Accessibility has a positive effect on Purchasing Decisions.

Credibility

Credibility is a critical factor influencing how consumers perceive information and make purchasing decisions in online environments. Research indicates that credibility—derived from trustworthiness, expertise, and authenticity—plays a pivotal role in shaping consumer attitudes toward online content and sources (Riaz et al., 2021). Emotional and informational encouragement within online communities helps build perceived credibility and strengthens consumer confidence in both the platform and the brand. Mabkhot and Isa (2022) further assert that the tone and clarity of messages conveyed by companies significantly affect credibility perception, which in turn determines whether consumers view a brand as reliable and worth engaging with. In the context of social media, credible information enhances consumer trust, reduces perceived risk, and fosters stronger purchase intentions. Therefore, credibility is considered a major determinant in both the effectiveness of social media marketing and consumer purchasing behavior.

H5a: Credibility has a positive effect on Social Media.

H5b: Credibility has a positive effect on Purchasing Decisions.

Social Media

Social media itself serves as a dynamic platform that mediates the relationship between digital engagement and consumer behavior. As Cooley and Parks-Yancy (2019) observed, social media significantly influences both online and offline sales by facilitating communication, personalization, and brand exposure. The credibility and trustworthiness of the platform determine the extent to which consumers rely on social media recommendations during their decision-making process. Barnes (2015) found that posts shared by individuals familiar to the audience—such as friends, influencers, or peers—are more persuasive and have a stronger impact on purchase likelihood than paid advertisements. Social media thus operates not only as an information source but also as a social influence mechanism that shapes consumers' attitudes, intentions, and behaviors. Based on these findings, this study hypothesizes that:

H6: Social Media has a positive influence on Purchasing Decisions.

Research Framework

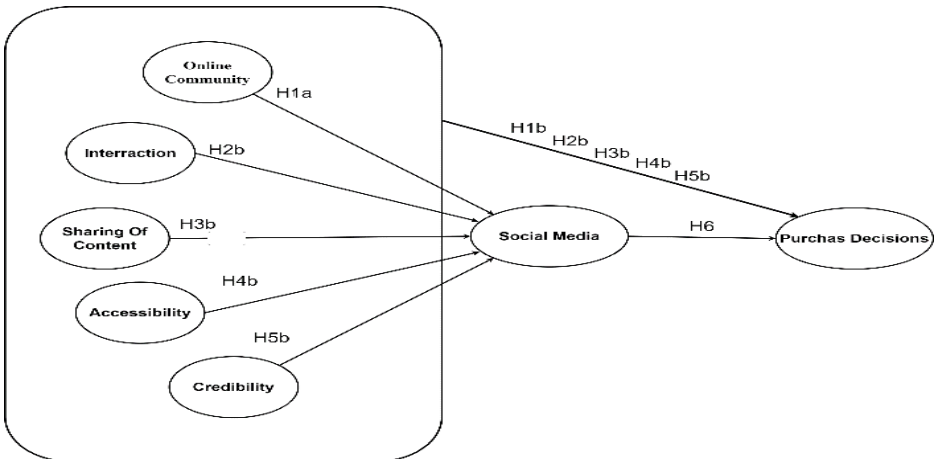


Fig. 1. Research Model

This research, based on Alfikri's research (Alfikri & Wardana, 2021), identifies factors in the social media construct consisting of online communities, interaction, sharing of content, accessibility, credibility, and purchasing decisions made by the public on E-Commerce Fgr. 1 shows the model and hypothesis of the proposed research.

3. Methodology

Measurement

A questionnaire was developed to understand the proposed variables. The questionnaire consisted of measurement items on online community activities, interactions, information disseminated, accessibility and credibility gained from social media that led to purchasing decisions by people. And control variables on gender, age, social media usage, and income.

The scale for online communities is mainly based on the instrument developed by Trivedi and Soni (Trivedi et al., 2020), which was previously used to explore social media. Interactions were measured with a scale previously used by Kristiadi (Kristiadi et al., 2014). Sharing of content items from Beig and Khan's study For accessibility adapted from Tajudeen's study(Tajudeen et al., 2018). measuring Credibility using a scale adapting Martins' study (Martins et al., 2019). For social media variables adapted from previous studies (Yadav, 2018). And the purchase decision is adapted from Riaz's study (Riaz et al., 2021). All items use a five-point Likert scale from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree".

Table 1 - Sample characteristics

Features	Percentage
Gender	
Male	**41%**
Female	**59%**
Age	
18 - 20 years	**12%**
21 – 23 years	**74%**
24 – 30 years	**14%**
30 – 40 years	
Marriage Status	
Marriage	**14%**
Single	**76%**
Education Level	
High School / Equivalent	**24%**
Bachelor	**66%**
Postgraduate	**10%**
Job Type	
Entrepreneur	**10%**
Part-Time	**16%**
Contract Employee	**24%**
Public Servant	**20%**
Student	**40%**
Active Social Media	
Youtube	**7,1%**
Twitter	**4,1%**
Intagram	**39,8%**
Facebook	**3,1%**
Tiktok	**37,8%**
Others	**8,2%**
Outcome in a month	
IDR.100.000 - 500.000	**41,2%**
IDR.500.000 - 1.100.000	**32,4%**
IDR.1.200.000 - 1.600.000	**19,1%**
IDR. 1.700.000 - 2.100.000	**4,4%**
IDR. 2.200.000 - 3.000.000	**1,5%**

Subjects

The questionnaire was distributed online through links and forms. With a total population of 100 respondents in a number of communities in Pekanbaru, the population is very large and

uncountable so a specific evaluation is needed on the character of specimens that are deemed relevant to the research objectives or what is commonly referred to as the Purposive Sampling technique(Obilor, 2023). in Table 1 displays a report on the profile of respondents in the sample.

4. Results

Reliability and validity testing of the model for measurement analysis should also be tested. Composite reliability (CV) and Cronbach's alpha both showed satisfactory levels, exceeding acceptable threshold values, indicating that internal consistency reliability was met. In the same way, model similarity and average variance extracted (AVE) also reached acceptable values for convergent validity. In Previous Research (Ho & Rezaei, 2018), average variance extraction is also a component of construct reliability; the minimum AVE is 0.5. Construct reliability can be defined as results that are consistent enough that there is no measurement error. Dijkstra-Henseler's rho (qA), J€oreskog's rho (qc), Cronbach's alpha (a), and composite reliability were assessed to determine construct validity and reliability. Therefore, the convergent validity and internal consistency of the scales validated the measurement model used in this study. The quality of the measurement model has been confirmed, as it has achieved satisfactory results in the validity and reliability tests. The results are summarized in Table 2. All factor loadings, qA, qc, and Cronbach's alpha values are acceptable (above 0.7) (Moslehpour et al., 2021).

Table 2 - Construct Validity And Reliability

Indicator	Loadings	CR	AVE	Jöreskog's rho (ρc)	Dijkstra-Henseler's rho (ρA)
OC1	0.760	0.779	0.605	0.858	0.813
OC2	0.868				
OC3	0.824				
OC4	0.641				
ITR1	0.917	0.811	0.706	0.877	0.951
ITR2	0.844				
ITR3	0.751				
SOC1	0.808	0.741	0.657	0.852	0.751
SOC2	0.831				
SOC3	0.792				
ACC1	0.832	0.753	0.671	0.859	0.762
ACC2	0.872				
ACC3	0.749				
CR1	0.776	0.867	0.716	0.909	0.900
CR2	0.921				
CR3	0.894				
CR4	0.785				
SM1	0.810	0.746	0.665	0.856	0.750
SM2	0.883				
SM3	0.749				
PD1	0.818	0.703	0.626	0.834	0.710
PD2	0.783				
PD3	0.772				

In addition, Table. 3 shows discriminant validity according to the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio of Correlations (HTMT) criterion, which indicates that each value should be less than 0.85 or 0.90. This indicates that the discriminant is valid for all latent constructs. Furthermore, discriminant validity is examined through the application of the Fornell-Larcker Criterion. Table. 4 shows the diagonal square root of the AVE for the calculation of the independent variable (latent)

constructs. The results are compared with the correlation values of each recorded variable. Consequently, the discriminant validity of the latent constructs has been established, according to the findings from the cross-loading, HTMT, and Fornell-Larcker criteria.

Table 3 - Discriminatory Validity Using HTMT Criteria

	INT	OC	ACC	CR	PD	SOC	SM
INT							
OC	0.642						
ACC	0.408	0.470					
CR	0.393	0.393	0.650				
PD	0.447	0.503	0.518	0.542			
SOC	0.265	0.304	0,774	0.483	0.605		
SM	0.346	0.478	0.395	0.460	0.679	0.561	

Table 4 - Discriminant Validity By Fornel-Larcker Criteria

	INT	OC	ACC	CR	PD	SOC	SM
INT	0.840						
OC	0.485	0.778					
ACC	0.317	0.362	0.819				
CR	0.307	0.326	0.512	0.846			
PD	0.303	0.375	0.376	0.415	0.791		
SOC	0.226	0.229	0.574	0.39	0.433	0.811	
SM	0.313	0.373	0.295	0.382	0.496	0.42	0.816

Table 5. shows the coefficient of determination R2 (R Square) of the constructs. The coefficient of determination for both variables indicates good model performance: Purchase Decision (0.246) and Social Media (0.300). This means that about 24.6% of the variation in Purchase Decision can be explained by the variables used in the analysis. This means that there are still other factors that influence purchasing decisions that are not explained by these variables. And the use of Social Media has an influence of 30% on the dependent variable in the model used. This shows that Social Media has a significant influence, but there are still other factors outside the model that also affect the dependent variable.

Table 5 - Construct Coefficients Of Determination

Construct	R^2	Adjusted R^2
PD	0.246	0.238
SM	0.300	0.262

Table 6 Cohens F2 Indicators

Effect	Cohen's f2	Explanation
OC → SM	0.050	Weak influence
INT → SM	0.0011	Weak influence
SOC → SM	0.103	Medium influence
ACC → SM	0.010	Weak influence
CR → SM	0.043	Weak influence
SM → PD	0.326	Strong influence

Table 6. presents Cohen's f2 indicators of the relative influence of exogenous on endogenous variables. By determining the individual path coefficient values, it is possible to evaluate the model where values closer to 1.00 represent a statistically strong positive relationship between the variables. Conversely, values closer to 0 indicate a statistically weaker relationship.

Table 7 - Path Coefficient Hyphothesis

No	Hypothesis	Original	Mean Value	Std. Error	t-value	p-value	Result

		Coefficient					
H1a	Online Community → Social Media	0.221	0.213	0.115	1.921	0.027	Supported
H2a	Interaction → Social Media	0.103	0.122	0.108	0.951	0.171	Not Supported
H3a	Sharing of Content → Social Media	0.331	0.327	0.108	3.068	0.001	Supported
H4a	Accessibility → Social Media	-0.114	-0.094	0.129	0.884	0.188	Not Supported
H5a	Credibility → Social Media	0.208	0.213	0.123	1.696	0.045	Supported
H6	Social Media → Purchasing Decisions	0.496	0.507	0.101	4.918	0.000	Supported

Table 8 Path - Coefficient Mediation Hypothesis

No	**Hypothesis**	**Original Coefficient**	**Mean Value**	**Std. Error**	**t-value**	**p-value**	**Result**
H1b	Online Community → Social Media → Purchasing Decisions	0.110	0.111	0.069	1.599	0.055	Not Supported
H2b	Interaction → Social Media → Purchasing Decisions	0.051	0.058	0.054	0.953	0.170	Not Supported
H3b	Sharing of Content → Social Media → Purchasing Decisions	0.164	0.167	0.070	2.352	0.009	Supported
H4b	Accessibility → Social Media → Purchasing Decisions	-0.057	-0.049	0.069	0.817	0.207	Not Supported
H5b	Credibility → Social Media → Purchasing Decisions	0.103	0.111	0.069	1.484	0.069	Not Supported

The results of the hypothesis testing presented in Tables 7 and 8 reveal several important findings regarding the influence of social media factors on purchasing decisions. As shown in Table 7, Online Community (H1a) has a positive and significant effect on Social Media, with a p-value of 0.027, indicating that active participation within online communities enhances engagement and interaction on social media platforms. Meanwhile, Interaction (H2a) shows a positive but insignificant effect (p = 0.171), suggesting that social interactions alone are not

strong enough to influence social media activity. The variable Sharing of Content (H3a) demonstrates a positive and highly significant effect on Social Media (p = 0.001), confirming that content sharing is a crucial factor in driving user engagement and participation online. In contrast, Accessibility (H4a) does not significantly influence Social Media (p = 0.188), implying that ease of access does not directly contribute to higher engagement levels. Credibility (H5a) has a significant positive effect on Social Media (p = 0.045), highlighting the importance of trustworthy and authentic information in strengthening social media presence. Finally, Social Media (H6) itself has a strong and significant effect on Purchasing Decisions (p = 0.000), demonstrating that social media plays a key role in influencing consumer buying behavior.

Furthermore, the mediation results in Table 8 show that among all indirect relationships, only Sharing of Content (H3b)has a significant indirect effect on Purchasing Decisions through Social Media (p = 0.009). This finding indicates that content sharing not only enhances social media engagement but also indirectly drives consumer purchase intentions. Meanwhile, other mediation paths, including Online Community (H1b), Interaction (H2b), Accessibility (H4b), and Credibility (H5b), are not statistically significant, suggesting that their influence on purchasing decisions through social media remains limited. Overall, these results emphasize that content sharing and social media engagement are the most influential determinants of consumer purchasing behavior in the digital marketplace, while factors such as interaction, accessibility, and credibility play a supporting but less dominant role.

5. Discussion

The results of this study reveal important insights into how various social media factors influence consumer purchasing decisions in the context of e-commerce among young, educated, and socially active respondents in Pekanbaru. Most participants were university students and early-career individuals aged between 21 and 23 years, who actively engage with platforms such as Instagram and TikTok. This demographic profile reflects a digitally literate generation highly responsive to online interactions and content trends (Anand et al., 2023; Murshed & Ugurlu, 2023).

The finding that Online Community significantly influences Social Media engagement supports the idea that digital communities foster social belonging and encourage active participation in brand discussions. Respondents who are mostly single and frequent users of interactive platforms such as Instagram and TikTok are naturally inclined to join online communities that align with their interests. This outcome resonates with Elrayah and Jamil (2023), who emphasized that online communities shape e-commerce preferences by creating trust and shared experiences among consumers. Similarly, Horrich et al. (2025) highlighted that online networks build collective identity, strengthening social influence mechanisms that drive online engagement. Therefore, the sense of community among respondents contributes to vibrant discussions and enhances brand visibility on social media.

In contrast, Interaction did not show a significant impact on Social Media performance. Although the majority of respondents belong to the digital-native group, their engagement may be more passive—preferring content consumption over active participation. Saha and Sahney (2022) argued that interaction must be meaningful and consistent to drive social engagement effectively, while Ausat (2023) noted that superficial exchanges in digital spaces often fail to translate into behavioral outcomes. This pattern is particularly relevant for young consumers, who may value content entertainment more than direct engagement with brands. Consequently, while respondents frequently scroll and react to posts, they may not engage deeply enough to influence overall social media dynamics.

The Sharing of Content variable emerged as a strong and significant driver of Social Media effectiveness, demonstrating that content dissemination is central to building digital engagement. This finding aligns with the behavioral patterns of respondents who spend considerable time sharing and reposting visually appealing or trend-based content. As supported by Ali and Naushad (2023), social media marketing strategies that encourage content sharing amplify brand image and increase purchase intentions. Moreover, Jimmy et al. (2024) found that user-driven sharing, particularly among Gen Z and Millennials, enhances the virality and trustworthiness of online messages. In this study, content sharing not only enhanced social engagement but also mediated purchasing decisions, confirming its dual role as both an engagement mechanism and a conversion driver (Karina et al., 2023; Stevani et al., 2023).

Conversely, Accessibility did not significantly affect Social Media performance, suggesting that ease of access alone does not determine engagement or influence purchasing behavior. Although respondents are active internet users with continuous access to online platforms, accessibility has become a baseline expectation rather than a motivational factor. This observation is consistent with the work of Kusdiana et al. (2023), who indicated that when digital access becomes universal, it no longer serves as a competitive advantage. The current generation assumes accessibility as a given, shifting their attention instead toward content quality and social influence.

Credibility, on the other hand, showed a significant positive influence on Social Media, highlighting the growing importance of trust and authenticity in digital interactions. Respondents, particularly students and young professionals, tend to rely on credible reviews, influencers, and peer recommendations when making online purchase decisions. This finding supports the research of Enjelika et al. (2023) and Astuti et al. (2025), who emphasized that credibility enhances consumer trust and reduces perceived risks in online shopping. Furthermore, Hasanah and Setyaning (2025) suggested that credibility strengthens brand perception and shapes economic behavior by reinforcing consumers' confidence in online brands. Therefore, authenticity and reliability remain key determinants of social media effectiveness among younger digital consumers.

Finally, the results confirm that Social Media has a strong positive influence on Purchasing Decisions, reaffirming its role as a mediating and influential factor in consumer behavior. Respondents' frequent use of visual and interactive platforms such as Instagram and TikTok supports the idea that social media shapes their purchase motivations through exposure to trends, influencer endorsements, and peer recommendations. This finding echoes the conclusions of Nurkariani et al. (2025) and Yulianti et al. (2025), who found that social media engagement directly enhances satisfaction and purchase intention by providing easy access to promotional content and social proof. Similarly, Siregar et al. (2025) and Vebby and Revnu (2025) noted that social media's visual storytelling and branding strategies can strongly influence consumer perceptions and decisions in local markets like Pekanbaru.

The mediation analysis further reveals that only Sharing of Content indirectly affects Purchasing Decisions through Social Media, highlighting the strategic importance of user-generated content. This suggests that when respondents actively share brand-related posts, their peers are more likely to develop interest and trust in the brand. As supported by Murshed and Ugurlu (2023) and Horrich et al. (2025), social sharing functions as both a social endorsement and an informational mechanism that drives sustainable online consumer behavior. Other mediation paths, such as online community and credibility, showed limited indirect effects—indicating that their influence operates more directly through engagement rather than through mediated relationships.

Overall, these findings illustrate that the purchasing behavior of digitally active consumers in Pekanbaru is primarily driven by engagement-based factors—particularly content sharing and social media credibility—rather than structural or access-based variables. This aligns with the broader perspective that in the digital age, social validation, peer influence, and content

virality are the dominant forces shaping consumer decisions (Ali & Naushad, 2023; Elrayah & Jamil, 2023; Horrich et al., 2025). Thus, businesses aiming to enhance e-commerce performance should prioritize authentic community engagement, credible messaging, and shareable digital content to align with the behavioral patterns of young, tech-savvy consumers.

6. Conclusion

This study concludes that social media serves as a pivotal driver of online purchasing behavior among the Pekanbaru community, particularly through content sharing, credibility, and community engagement. The findings highlight that interactive and shareable content significantly enhances consumer purchase intentions, while credible information fosters trust and strengthens consumer confidence in e-commerce platforms. These results reaffirm the vital role of social media as not only a communication tool but also a behavioral influence mechanism that shapes how consumers perceive brands and make purchasing decisions in the digital marketplace.

Despite these valuable insights, this study is not without limitations. The sample is primarily composed of young, educated, and socially active individuals, which may not fully represent the broader population with varying socioeconomic and digital literacy levels. Moreover, the study focused on a specific geographic area—Pekanbaru—limiting its generalizability to other cultural or regional contexts. The cross-sectional nature of the data also restricts the ability to observe dynamic behavioral changes over time. Future studies should consider longitudinal or mixed-method approaches to capture evolving consumer interactions and motivations across different social media platforms.

Future research should also explore additional moderating and mediating variables such as brand image, influencer credibility, and emotional engagement, which could further explain how social media impacts purchase decisions. Expanding the research across different demographic groups and incorporating diverse e-commerce contexts will provide a more holistic understanding of consumer digital behavior. Additionally, continuous adaptation to emerging technologies such as AI-driven marketing, virtual influencers, and interactive live commerce will be essential. As social media ecosystems continue to evolve, future investigations should prioritize real-time behavioral analytics and cross-platform comparisons to ensure that marketing strategies remain effective, adaptive, and consumer-centered.

References

Alfikri, R., & Wardana, D. S. (2021). The influence of social media users on purchasing decisions on UKM in Pontianak. Terbuka Journal of Economics and Business, 2(1), 59–69. https://doi.org/10.33830/tjeb.v2i1.1482

Ali, I., & Naushad, M. (2023). Examining the influence of social media marketing on purchase intention: The mediating role of brand image. Innovative Marketing, 19(4), 145. https://doi.org/10.21511/im.19(4).2023.12

Anand, B., Chakravarty, H., Athalye, M. S. G., Varalaxmi, P., & Mishra, A. K. (2023). Understanding consumer behaviour in the digital age: A study of online shopping habits. Shodha Prabha, 48(3), 84–93.

Astuti, R., Wardani, P. D., Komaludin, A., & Surgawati, I. (2025). Economic value of brand: The role of gamification, price fairness perception, and service quality on brand equity through customer trust of Wardah Cosmetics. International Journal of Economics Development Research, 6(5), 2273–2298. https://doi.org/10.37385/ijedr.v6i5.8822

Ausat, A. M. A. (2023). The role of social media in shaping public opinion and its influence on economic decisions. Technology and Society Perspectives (TACIT), 1(1), 35–44.

Azzaakiyyah, H. K. (2023). The impact of social media use on social interaction in contemporary society. Technology and Society Perspectives (TACIT), 1(1), 1–9. https://doi.org/10.61100/tacit.v1i1.33

Barnes, N. G. (2015). EWOM drives social commerce: A survey of Millennials in US and abroad. Journal of Marketing Development and Competitiveness, 9(2), 36–47.

Beig, F. A., & Khan, M. F. (2018). Impact of social media marketing on brand experience: A study of select apparel brands on Facebook. Vision, 22(3), 264–275. https://doi.org/10.1177/0972262918785962

Cooley, D., & Parks-Yancy, R. (2019). The effect of social media on perceived information credibility and decision making. Journal of Internet Commerce, 18(3), 249–269. https://doi.org/10.1080/15332861.2019.1595362

Elrayah, M., & Jamil, S. (2023). Examining the role of social media in shaping e-commerce preferences. International Journal of eBusiness and eGovernment Studies, 15(2), 149–171.

Enjelika, P., Purwati, A. A., & Jusmarni, J. (2023). Boosting trust and purchase enthusiasm: Impact of online customer ratings and e-service quality in online food delivery. International Journal of Information System and Innovation Management, 1(2), 100–117. https://doi.org/10.55583/ijisim.v1i2.784

Hajli, N., Shanmugam, M., Papagiannidis, S., Zahay, D., & Richard, M. O. (2017). Branding co-creation with members of online brand communities. Journal of Business Research, 70, 136–144. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2016.08.026

Hasan, M., & Sohail, M. S. (2020). The influence of social media marketing on consumers' purchase decision: Investigating the effects of local and nonlocal brands. Journal of International Consumer Marketing, 32(3), 1–18. https://doi.org/10.1080/08961530.2020.1795043

Hasanah, U., & Setyaning, A. (2025). Brand-driven economic behavior: Analyzing the impact of brand consciousness and perceived value on luxury beauty purchases at Sephora. International Journal of Economics Development Research, 6(5), 2446–2460. https://doi.org/10.37385/ijedr.v6i5.8373

Ho, R. C., & Rezaei, S. (2018). Social media communication and consumers' decisions: Analysis of the antecedents for intended apps purchase. Journal of Relationship Marketing, 17(3), 204–228. https://doi.org/10.1080/15332667.2018.1492322

Horrich, A., Ertz, M., & Bekir, I. (2025). Exploring the role of social media in shaping sustainable consumer behavior: A qualitative study. Cogent Business & Management, 12(1), 2560648. https://doi.org/10.1080/23311975.2025.2560648

Jimmy, J., Hamzah, M. L., & Rizki, M. (2024). Unveiling Shopee's e-commerce success: How eWOM, promotions, product variety, and security shape Gen Z and Millennials' purchase decisions. International Journal of Information System and Innovation Management, 2(2), 56–65. https://doi.org/10.55583/ijisim.v2i2.1018

Karina, D., Oh, A., & Hamzah, Z. (2023). Unravelling factors shaping purchase intention for "Tri" cellular card. International Journal of Information System and Innovation Management, 1(1), 32–45. https://doi.org/10.55583/ijisim.v1i1.605

Kristiadi, A., Hartoyo, H., Yusuf, E., & Sukandar, D. (2014). Analisis pengaruh online community experience dalam pembentukan sikap pelanggan terhadap merek dan citra perusahaan. Jurnal Manajemen Untar, 18(3), 112367.

Kusdiana, Y., Islami, R., & Suryadi, N. (2024). Innovative approaches to financial distress: The impact of company size and sales growth on food and beverage companies listed on the Indonesia Stock Exchange. International Journal of Information System and Innovation Management, 2(2), 66–74. https://doi.org/10.55583/ijisim.v2i2.1156

Kusdiana, Y., Yusnelly, A., & Suryadi, N. (2023). Purchase decision: Role of price and service quality. International Journal of Information System and Innovation Management, 1(2), 92–99. https://doi.org/10.55583/ijisim.v1i2.775

Lăzăroiu, G., Neguriţă, O., Grecu, I., Grecu, G., & Mitran, P. C. (2020). Consumers' decision-making process on social commerce platforms: Online trust, perceived risk, and purchase intentions. Frontiers in Psychology, 11, 890. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2020.00890

Mabkhot, H., & Isa, N. (2022). The influence of the credibility of social media influencers (SMIs) on the consumers' purchase intentions: Evidence from Saudi Arabia. Unpublished manuscript.

Martins, J., Costa, C., Oliveira, T., Gonçalves, R., & Branco, F. (2019). How smartphone advertising influences consumers' purchase intention. Journal of Business Research, 94, 378–387. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2017.12.047

Mayank, Y., & Rahman, Z. (2018). The influence of social media marketing activities on customer loyalty: A study of e-commerce industry. Benchmarking: An International Journal, 25(9), 3882–3905. https://doi.org/10.1108/BIJ-05-2017-0092

Moslehpour, M., Dadvari, A., Nugroho, W., & Do, B. R. (2021). The dynamic stimulus of social media marketing on purchase intention of Indonesian airline products and services. Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics, 33(2), 561–583. https://doi.org/10.1108/APJML-07-2019-0442

Murshed, N. A., & Ugurlu, E. (2023). Navigating the digital marketplace: A holistic model integrating social media engagement and consumer behavior factors to enhance online shopping adoption. Jurnal Manajemen Teori dan Terapan, 16(3). https://doi.org/10.20473/JMTT.V16I3.52059

Nurkariani, N. L., Naraswari, D. A. S., & Deli, M. M. (2025). Exploring the impact of product quality and social media promotion on purchase decisions through customer satisfaction. INVEST: Jurnal Inovasi Bisnis dan Akuntansi, 6(2), 432–450. https://doi.org/10.55583/invest.v6i2.1547

Obilor, E. I. (2023). Convenience and purposive sampling techniques: Are they the same? International Journal of Innovative Social & Science Education Research, 11(1), 1–7.

Pratama, M. O., Harinitha, D., Indriani, S., Denov, B., & Mahayana, D. (2020). Influence factors of social media and gadget addiction of adolescent in Indonesia. Jurnal Sistem Informasi, 16(1), 16–24. https://doi.org/10.21609/jsi.v16i1.918

Razak, N. A., Pangil, F., Zin, M. L. M., Yunus, N. A. M., & Asnawi, N. H. (2016). Theories of knowledge sharing behavior in business strategy. Procedia Economics and Finance, 37, 545–553. https://doi.org/10.1016/s2212-5671(16)30163-0

Riaz, M. U., Guang, L. X., Zafar, M., Shahzad, F., Shahbaz, M., & Lateef, M. (2021). Consumers' purchase intention and decision-making process through social networking sites: A social commerce construct. Behaviour & Information Technology, 40(1), 99–115. https://doi.org/10.1080/0144929X.2020.1846790

Saha, M., & Sahney, S. (2022). Exploring the relationships between socialization agents, social media communication, online shopping experience, and pre-purchase search: A moderated model. Internet Research, 32(2), 536–567. https://doi.org/10.1108/INTR-08-2020-0472

Siregar, A. H., Denni, D., & Veronica, V. (2025). Price and product quality as determinants of consumer purchase decisions for spare parts at CV Fajar Motor. INVEST: Jurnal Inovasi Bisnis dan Akuntansi, 6(2), 267–275. https://doi.org/10.55583/invest.v6i2.1392

Stevani, S., Sitompul, S. S., & Agusra, D. (2023). The role of brand image, promotions, and product quality in shaping customer satisfaction and loyalty. International Journal of Information System and Innovation Management, 1(2), 74–91. https://doi.org/10.55583/ijisim.v1i2.737

Tajudeen, F. P., Jaafar, N. I., & Ainin, S. (2018). Understanding the impact of social media usage among organizations. Information and Management, 55(3), 308–321. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.im.2017.08.004

Trivedi, J., Soni, S., & Kishore, A. (2020). Exploring the role of social media communications in the success of professional sports leagues: An emerging market perspective. Journal of Promotion Management, 27(2), 306–331. https://doi.org/10.1080/10496491.2020.1829774

Unnava, V., & Aravindakshan, A. (2021). How does consumer engagement evolve when brands post across multiple social media? Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science, 49, 864–881. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11747-021-00785-z

Vebby, V., & Revnu, M. (2025). @Maksudas_Id and visual narrative: Digital branding strategy in Pekanbaru. INVEST: Jurnal Inovasi Bisnis dan Akuntansi, 6(2), 380–386. https://doi.org/10.55583/invest.v6i2.1518

Wu, S.-H., & Hsu, Y.-C. (2016). The relationship of online information exchange and offline purchase intention: Dually driven by motivation-opportunity-ability and social capital. Xing Xiao Ping Lun, 13(4), 415–450. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijinfomgt.2019.08.010

Yulianti, Y., Lukiyana, L., & Suryono, I. (2025). The impact of free strategy and delivery speed on consumer satisfaction with the level of ease of product return as a moderation variable on Shopee marketplace users in DKI Jakarta. International Journal of Economics Development Research, 6(5), 2940–2955. https://doi.org/10.37385/ijedr.v6i6.8773