
The Role of Trust as an Economic Driver: The Impact of Product Quality and User Experience on Shopee Marketplace Purchases

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Abstract:

This study aims to examine: (1) the effect of product quality on purchasing decisions, (2) the effect of ease of use on purchasing decisions, (3) the effect of trust on purchasing decisions, (4) the effect of product quality on trust, (5) the effect of ease of use on trust, (6) the mediating role of trust on the relationship between product quality and purchasing decisions, and (7) the mediating role of trust on the relationship between ease of use and purchasing decisions. The population of this study consisted of 61 fourth-semester students enrolled in the Master of Management Science Program at Ganesha University of Education. The census method was used to determine the sample, resulting in 61 participants. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire and analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) based on Partial Least Squares (PLS). The results indicate that: (1) product quality has a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions, suggesting that higher product quality on the Shopee Marketplace increases students' purchasing decisions; (2) ease of use has a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions, indicating that greater ease of use enhances students' purchasing decisions; (3) trust positively and significantly affects purchasing decisions, meaning that higher trust in the Shopee Marketplace leads to higher purchasing decisions; (4) product quality positively and significantly influences trust, showing that better product quality increases students' trust; (5) ease of use positively and significantly influences trust, implying that easier use enhances students' trust; (6) trust partially mediates the effect of product quality on purchasing decisions, indicating that higher product quality increases trust, which in turn strengthens purchasing decisions; and (7) trust fully mediates the effect of ease of use on purchasing decisions, suggesting that greater ease of use enhances trust, thereby positively influencing purchasing decisions. These findings highlight the critical role of trust as a mediator between product quality, ease of use, and purchasing decisions in the context of the Shopee Marketplace.

Keywords: *Product Quality, Ease of Use, Trust, Purchase Decision*

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1. Introduction

Technological and business developments in Indonesia are progressing rapidly, encouraging companies to think creatively, innovatively, and responsively to technology to remain competitive in the business world (Farhat & Al-Khatib, 2025; Handoyo & Santoso, 2024). One major change is the shift from conventional buying and selling systems to electronic transactions, supported by the increasing number of internet users. Indonesia ranks sixth globally in terms of internet users, which creates significant opportunities for the digital economy and e-commerce growth (Wattoo & Ullah, 2025; Wistedt & Larsson, 2024). Among various technological applications, e-commerce platforms have emerged as a major driver of digital transactions. According to Merchant Machine, Indonesia was the fastest-growing e-commerce market in 2020, with a growth rate of 78%, largely driven by changing consumer behavior that increasingly favors convenience and digital literacy (Kakkar & Sharma, 2025; Syafika & Rahman, 2024). Consumers are increasingly familiar with smartphones and online payment methods, which facilitates wider adoption of online marketplaces such as Shopee, Tokopedia, and others (Aurelia & Widianari, 2023; Xiao & Benyoucef, 2021).

Shopee has become one of the most popular e-commerce platforms in Indonesia. In the second quarter of 2020, Shopee recorded an average monthly visit of 93.4 million and ranked first on both the App Store and Play Store, with a transaction volume of 260 million, reflecting a 130% increase compared to the previous year (Ngo & Pham, 2024; Zhang & Zhang, 2023). This rapid adoption demonstrates the increasing reliance of consumers on digital platforms for their purchasing needs. Purchasing decisions are the culmination of a consumer's evaluation of product options based on various considerations, influenced by both internal and external factors (Kotler, 2017; Prayudha & Suwitho, 2019). Internal factors include product quality and promotions, whereas external factors include trust and system usability. Product quality is defined as the ability of a product to meet or exceed customer expectations, while ease of use encompasses system navigation, learning efficiency, and time savings, all of which can significantly affect consumer behavior in e-commerce contexts (Lee & Park, 2025; Yang & Li, 2022).

Ease of use is particularly crucial for platforms such as Shopee, which provides features like clear product categorization, multiple payment methods, and cash-on-delivery options. Despite these features, not all users maximize their potential due to limited understanding or familiarity with the platform (Ngo & Tran, 2024; Zhang & Zhang, 2023). Therefore, studying the effect of ease of use on purchasing decisions is essential to understand consumer adoption patterns. Trust is another critical factor influencing purchasing decisions. Consumers' trust in e-commerce platforms affects their willingness to transact online (McKnight, Choudhury, & Kacmar, 2002; Pavlou & Gefen, 2004). Trust is shaped by personal experiences, perceptions, and information quality, and can mediate the relationship between product quality, ease of use, and purchasing behavior (Rosillo-Díaz & Santos, 2024; Shankar & Jebarajakirthy, 2023; Wuan & Li, 2024). Prior studies have shown mixed results,

highlighting the need for context-specific investigations, particularly in emerging digital markets like Indonesia (Zolfagharian & Lee, 2022; Zott & Amit, 2020).

Despite the popularity of Shopee among the general population, Similarweb data (2023) indicate that the largest user groups are aged 18–24 (26.88%) and 25–34 (36.12%), suggesting a predominance of university students. However, preliminary surveys among Master’s students in the Faculty of Economics at Ganesha University of Education showed lower Shopee usage among Management Science students compared to Accounting students, revealing a discrepancy between general trends and specific user behavior. This research gap highlights the need to examine factors influencing purchasing decisions, particularly product quality, ease of use, and the mediating role of trust (Ngo & Pham, 2024; Wattoo & Ullah, 2025; Syafika & Rahman, 2024).

Given these considerations, this study is both urgent and novel as it investigates the direct and indirect effects of product quality and ease of use on purchasing decisions through trust as a mediating variable in the Shopee Marketplace. Understanding these relationships provides theoretical contributions to consumer behavior and e-commerce adoption literature, while offering practical insights for platform managers to enhance usability, trust, and product strategies to increase consumer engagement and purchase behavior (Aurelia & Widiyanti, 2023; Kakkar & Sharma, 2025; Wistedt & Larsson, 2024).

2. Theoretical review

Purchasing Decision : Purchasing decisions represent a systematic approach to addressing human needs and desires through a sequence of activities, including the recognition of needs, information search, evaluation of alternatives, the purchase decision itself, and post-purchase behavior (Kotler, 2017; Prayudha & Suwitho, 2019). According to Pavlou and Gefen (2004), purchasing decisions involve selecting one option from two or more alternative choices, implying that consumers evaluate multiple alternatives before committing to a purchase. McKnight, Choudhury, and Kacmar (2002) further explain that the decision-making process encompasses determining what to buy, when to buy, and whether to make the purchase, based on previous knowledge, experience, and information gathered. From these perspectives, purchasing decisions can be understood as activities where consumers evaluate multiple alternatives to satisfy their needs and preferences, ultimately deciding whether to obtain a product or service (Farhat & Al-Khatib, 2025; Wistedt & Larsson, 2024). In the context of e-commerce, these decisions are influenced not only by product attributes but also by technological features, user experience, and trust in the platform (Zhao & Bhattacharya, 2024; Wattoo & Ullah, 2025).

Product Quality : Product quality is defined as the extent to which a product meets or exceeds consumer expectations (Xiao & Benyoucef, 2021; Yoon & Kim, 2020). Kakkar and Sharma (2025) note that product quality includes the physical condition, functionality, durability, reliability, ease of use, and maintainability of a product,

whether tangible goods or service offerings. Similarly, Rosillo-Díaz and Santos (2024) emphasize that high-quality products consistently satisfy consumer needs and contribute to increased consumer confidence and purchasing intentions. Products are developed and varied continuously by companies—ranging from small traders to large enterprises—to achieve profitability and maintain competitiveness in the market (Aurelia & Widiantri, 2023; Zolfagharian & Lee, 2022). Quality is therefore not only a measure of technical performance but also a determinant of perceived value, which can significantly influence consumer behavior in digital marketplaces like Shopee (Ngo & Pham, 2024; Zhao & Bhattacharya, 2024).

Ease of Use : Ease of use is a critical factor in consumer adoption of e-commerce platforms (Lee & Park, 2025; Yang & Li, 2022). It refers to the extent to which a consumer perceives that using a technology or information system requires minimal effort, time, and cognitive load (Zhang & Zhang, 2023; Wuan & Li, 2024). According to the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), perceived ease of use directly influences consumers' attitudes toward a system and their behavioral intention to use it (Shankar & Jebarajakirthi, 2023; Syafika & Rahman, 2024). In online shopping contexts, ease of use includes factors such as straightforward navigation, clear product categorization, fast search and checkout processes, multiple payment options, and accessible customer support (Ngo & Tran, 2024; Xiao & Benyoucef, 2021). Consumers are more likely to engage and complete purchases when they perceive the platform as easy to use, which in turn enhances trust and satisfaction (Zhang & Zhang, 2023; Wistedt & Larsson, 2024).

Trust : Trust is a fundamental component in online commerce, representing the expectation that the seller or platform will perform reliably, ethically, and in accordance with consumer expectations, even when such actions are beyond the consumer's control (McKnight, Choudhury, & Kacmar, 2002; Pavlou & Gefen, 2004). Trust is recognized as essential for initiating transactions, building long-term relationships, and achieving business success, particularly in e-commerce environments (Pratama, 2015; Piarna & Apandi, 2018). In digital marketplaces, trust is shaped by product quality, ease of use, user experience, online reviews, and platform credibility (Zolfagharian & Lee, 2022; Wattoo & Ullah, 2025). High levels of consumer trust reduce perceived risk, facilitate decision-making, and strengthen purchasing intentions (Rosillo-Díaz & Santos, 2024; Shankar & Jebarajakirthi, 2023). Therefore, trust often functions as a mediating variable between technological factors, product attributes, and consumer behavior in online purchasing decisions (Wuan & Li, 2024; Zhao & Bhattacharya, 2024).

3. Methodology

This study employed a quantitative approach with an explanatory research design, aiming to analyze and explain the relationships between independent variables (product quality and ease of use) and the dependent variable (purchasing decisions), as well as the mediating role of trust. The population comprised 61 fourth-semester students of the Master of Management Science Study Program at Ganesha University

of Education, and the census method was used to select the entire population as the sample. Data collection was carried out over six months, from the end of 2024 to mid-2025, using a structured questionnaire with a five-point Likert scale distributed via Google Forms. The data were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) based on Partial Least Squares (PLS), a method suitable for small sample sizes and not requiring data to follow a normal distribution (Ghozali, 2018; Garson, 2016). The analysis was conducted in two stages: the measurement model (outer model), which assessed construct validity and reliability through convergent validity (outer loadings and Average Variance Extracted [AVE]), discriminant validity (cross-loadings and the square root of AVE), and composite reliability; and the structural model (inner model), which evaluated the hypothesized relationships among variables. Hypothesis testing was performed using bootstrapping procedures, while mediation effects were examined using the Variance Accounted For (VAF) approach to determine the extent to which trust mediates the relationships between product quality, ease of use, and purchasing decisions. This comprehensive methodological framework ensures both the validity and reliability of the study results while providing robust insights into the dynamics of online purchasing behavior in the Shopee Marketplace context.

4. Empirical Findings/Results

Instrument Test

Validity Test

A research instrument is said to be valid if it is able to measure what it is intended to measure. An instrument is said to be valid if it has a correlation coefficient between the items and the total score in the instrument greater than 0.30 with an Alpha error rate of 0.04. The results of the validity test show that all research instruments used to measure the variables of product quality, ease of use, trust and purchasing decisions have a correlation coefficient value with the total score of all statement items greater than 0.30 with a significance of less than 0.05. This indicates that the statement items in the research instrument are valid and suitable for use as research instruments.

Reliability Test

The reliability test for this research instrument used Cronbach's Alpha value, which is to determine the unidimensionality of the statement items regarding the latent variables studied (product quality, ease of use, trust, and purchasing decisions). The Cronbach's Alpha value is declared reliable if its value is greater than or equal to 0.60. A summary of the results of the research instrument reliability test can be seen in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Reliability Test Results

No.	Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	Information
1	Product quality (X1)	0.774	Reliable
2	Ease of use (X2)	0.841	Reliable
3	Trust (Y1)	0.814	Reliable
4	Purchase decision (Y2)	0.800	Reliable

Source: Data Processing Results, 2025

The reliability test results presented in Table 1 indicate that all research instruments had a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of more than 0.60. Therefore, it can be concluded that all variables have met the reliability requirements and can be used for research.

Partial Least Square (PLS) Data Analysis Results

Convergent Validity

The test results show that all indicators have a correlation value (outer loading) above 0.50, which means that all indicators of the product quality, ease of use, trust, and purchasing decisions variables meet the convergent validity requirements, so they can be declared convergently valid.

Discriminant Validity

Discriminant validity testing based on the square root of the AVE value shows that each variable has a square root of the AVE value greater than its correlation with other variables. Thus, all variables in the model meet the discriminant validity criteria and can be well distinguished from one another.

Table 2. Discriminant Validity Results

Research Variables	AVE	AVE Root	Correlation			
			Product quality (X1)	Ease of use (X2)	Trust (Y1)	Purchase decision (Y2)
Product quality (X1)	0.591	0.769	1,000			
Ease of use (X2)	0.706	0.841	0.481	1,000		
Trust (Y1)	0.754	0.868	0.733	0.562	1,000	
Purchase decision (Y2)	0.641	0.800	0.761	0.681	0.766	1,000

Source: Data Processing Results, 2025

Composite Reliability

The reliability test results showed that all variables had composite reliability and Cronbach's alpha values above 0.70. This indicates that all constructs in this study are reliable and consistent in measuring their intended variables.

Structural model or inner model evaluation

R-Square

The R-squared value indicates that 59.4% of the trust variable can be explained by product quality and ease of use, while 74.6% of the purchase decision is explained by product quality, ease of use, and trust. The remainder is explained by factors outside the model, thus providing a fairly strong explanatory power.

Table 3. R-square Value of the Dependent Variable

Variables	R-square	Adjusted R-square
Trust (Y1)	0.594	0.580
Purchase decision (Y2)	0.746	0.732

Source: Data Processing Results, 2025

Predictive Relevance (Q-Square)

The Q-Square test results showed a value of 0.436 for trust and 0.447 for purchasing decisions. These values fall into the moderate category, indicating the model has sufficient predictive ability to explain endogenous variables.

Table 4. Q-Squared Test Results

	SSO	SSE	Q ² (=1-SSE/SSO)
Y1. (Trust)	183,000	103,158	0.436
Y2. (Purchase Decision)	244,000	134,918	0.447

Source: Data Processing Results, 2025

F-Square

The F-Square test shows that product quality has a strong influence on trust (0.684) and a moderate influence on purchasing decisions (0.263). Ease of use has a moderate influence on purchasing decisions (0.284) and a weak influence on trust (0.141). Meanwhile, trust has a weak influence on purchasing decisions (0.146).

Table 5. F-Square Test Results

	Y1. (Trust)	Y2. (Buying decision)
X1. (Product Quality)	0.684	0.263
X2. (Ease of Use)	0.141	0.284
Y1. (Trust)		0.146

Source: Data Processing Results, 2025

Goodness of Fit (GoF)

The model was declared fit based on the SRMR test results of 0.117, which is below the tolerance limit of 0.25, for both the saturated model and the estimated model. This indicates that the model is suitable for testing the research hypothesis.

Table 6. Goodness of Fit Test Results

	Saturated model	Estimated model
SRMR	0.117	0.117
d ULS	2,357	2,357
d G	1,970	1,970
Chi-square	494,266	494,266
NFI	0.525	0.525

Source: Data Processing Results, 2025

Hypothesis Testing Results

Results of the Direct Effect Test (Direct Effect - Path Coefficient)

This study uses a Partial Least Squares (PLS) analysis approach to test the previously stated research hypotheses. The results of the empirical model analysis using Partial Least Squares (PLS) analysis can be seen in Figure 1 below.

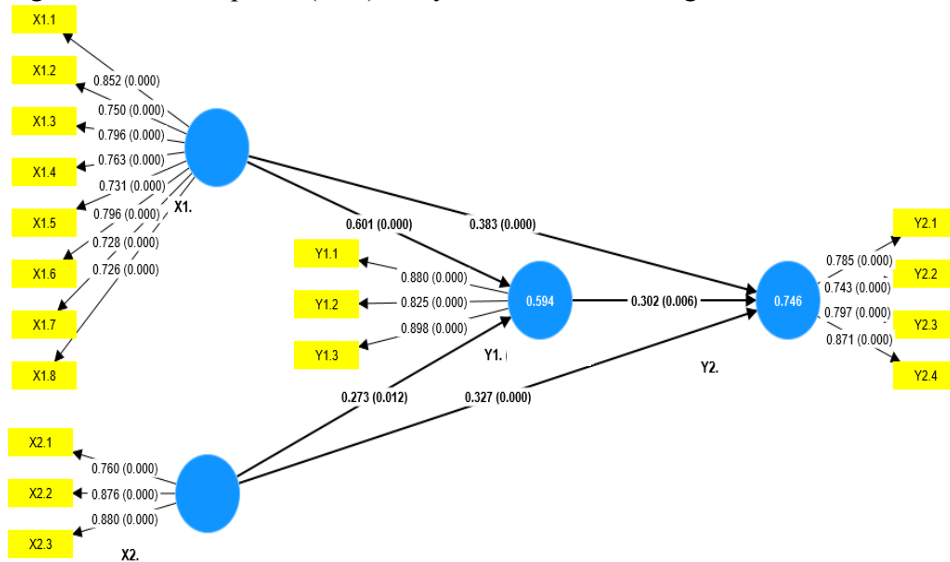


Figure 1. Empirical Model of Direct Influence

Figure 4.1 explains that product quality has a direct effect on purchasing decisions with a coefficient of 0.383, Ease of use has a direct effect on purchasing decisions with a coefficient of 0.327. Product quality has a direct effect on trust with a coefficient of 0.601. Ease of use has a direct effect on trust with a coefficient of 0.273. Trust has a direct effect on purchasing decisions with a coefficient of 0.302.

Table 7. Results of the Direct Effect Test (Path Coefficient)

Path Coefficient Between Variables	Path Coefficient	<i>t</i> Statistics	P Value	Conclusion
X1. (Product quality) -> Y1. (Trust)	0.601	5,295	0,000	Significant Positive
X1. (Product quality) -> Y2. (Purchase decision)	0.383	3,510	0,000	Significant Positive
X2. (Ease of use) -> Y1. (Trust)	0.273	2,500	0.012	Significant Positive
X2. (Ease of use) -> Y2. (Purchase decision)	0.327	3,604	0,000	Significant Positive
Y1. (Trust) -> Y2. (Purchase decision)	0.302	2,736	0.006	Significant Positive

Source: Data Processing Results, 2025

The results of the hypothesis testing indicate that all relationships between variables in the model have a positive and significant influence. Product quality is proven to have a positive and significant influence on trust (coefficient 0.601; $t = 5.295$; $p = 0.000$) and purchasing decisions (coefficient 0.383; $t = 3.510$; $p = 0.000$). Ease of use also has a positive and significant influence on trust (coefficient 0.273; $t = 2.500$; $p = 0.012$) and purchasing decisions (coefficient 0.327; $t = 3.604$; $p = 0.000$). In addition, trust has a positive and significant influence on purchasing decisions (coefficient 0.302; $t = 2.736$; $p = 0.006$). Thus, all hypotheses (H1 to H5) in this study are declared accepted.

Indirect Effect Testing

Indirect effect analysis is conducted to test the hypothesis of the indirect influence of an influencing variable (exogenous) on the influenced variable (endogenous) mediated by an intervening variable. If the p-value is <0.05 , the indirect relationship is declared significant, meaning the intervening variable is able to mediate the relationship between the exogenous variable and the endogenous variable. Conversely, if the p-value is >0.05 , the indirect relationship is declared insignificant, meaning the intervening variable is unable to mediate the relationship between the exogenous variable and the endogenous variable.

Table 8. Results of the Indirect Effect Test

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P value s
X1. (Product Quality) - >					
Y1. (Trust) ->	0.182	0.170	0.071	2,541	0.011
Y2. (Purchase Decision)					
X2. (Ease of Use) ->					
Y1. (Trust) ->	0.082	0.081	0.049	1,678	0.093
Y2. (Purchase Decision)					

Source: Data Processing Results, 2025

Product quality on purchasing decisions through trust as an intervening factor shows a p-value of $0.011 < 0.05$ with a t-statistic value of $2.541 > 1.96$. Thus, it can be concluded that the Product Quality variable shows a significant influence on purchasing decisions through trust. Ease of use on purchasing decisions through trust as an intervening factor shows a p-value of $0.093 > 0.05$ with a t-statistic value of $1.678 < 1.96$. Thus, it can be concluded that the ease of use variable shows an insignificant influence on purchasing decisions through trust.

Examination of Mediating Variables

The results of the mediation test using the VAF method in this study have met several requirements: first, the direct effect was found to be significant (a) when the trust variable (M) was not yet included in the model. Second, after the trust variable (M) was included in the model, the indirect effect (bxc) was also found to be significant.

Paths b and c were also significant. Third, the Variance Accounted For (VAF) was calculated using the formula:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{VAF} &= (0.601 \times 0.302) / (0.383 + 0.601 \times 0.302) \\ &= 0.1815 / 0.5645 \\ &= 0.3215 \text{ or } 32.15 \text{ percent.} \end{aligned}$$

Because the VAF value (32.15 percent) is between 20 percent and 80 percent, it can be categorized as a partial mediator. Thus, the hypothesis that trust mediates the influence of product quality on purchasing decisions is accepted. For more details, see Figure 2 below.

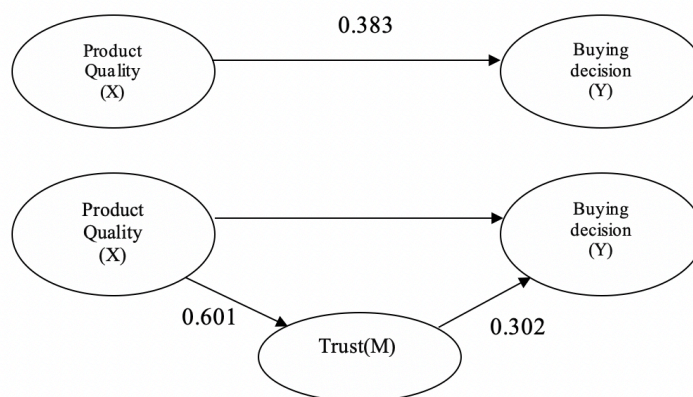


Figure 2. Testing the Mediation of Trust Variables On the relationship between product quality and purchasing decisions

The results of the second mediation test using the VAF method in this study have met several requirements: first, the direct effect was found to be significant (a) when the trust variable (M) was not yet included in the model. Second, after the trust variable (M) was included in the model, the indirect effect (bxc) was also found to be significant. Paths b and c were also significant. Third, the Variance Accounted For (VAF) was calculated using the formula:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{VAF} &= (0.273 \times 0.302) / (0.327 + 0.273 \times 0.302) \\ &= 0.08245 / 0.40945 \\ &= 0.20137 \text{ or } 20.137 \text{ percent.} \end{aligned}$$

Because the VAF value (20.137 percent) is between 20 percent and 80 percent, it can be categorized as a partial mediation. Thus, the hypothesis that trust mediates the effect of ease of use on purchasing decisions is accepted. For more details, see Figure 3 below.

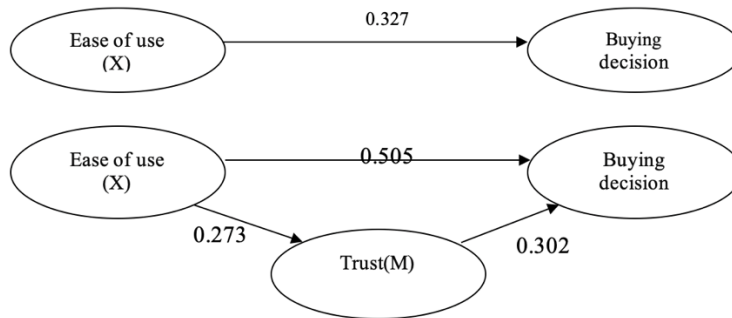


Figure 3. Testing the Mediation of Trust Variables On the Relationship between Ease of Use and Purchasing Decisions

5. Discussion

The Influence of Product Quality on Purchasing Decisions

The findings indicate that product quality positively affects students' purchasing decisions on Shopee. Attributes such as product performance, features, conformity to specifications, durability, and aesthetics significantly shape students' perceptions and their intention to purchase. High-quality products enhance consumer confidence and satisfaction, which subsequently strengthens purchase decisions. This result aligns with previous studies that emphasize the critical role of product quality in attracting consumer purchase intention in e-commerce settings (Aurelia & Widiyanti, 2023; Kakkar & Sharma, 2025; Rosillo-Díaz & Santos, 2024; Yoon & Kim, 2020). Consistent with Xiao and Benyoucef (2021), superior product quality not only satisfies functional needs but also builds psychological assurance, increasing the likelihood of transaction completion on digital platforms.

The Effect of Ease of Use on Purchasing Decisions

Ease of use was found to have a positive influence on purchasing decisions. Features such as simple navigation, intuitive interface design, fast search capabilities, and straightforward transaction processes enhance user satisfaction and encourage purchasing behavior. When users perceive an application as easy to operate, they are more likely to complete purchases and engage with the platform regularly. These findings are supported by research highlighting the importance of system usability in online purchasing, demonstrating that ease of use directly facilitates consumer adoption and decision-making (Lee & Park, 2025; Ngo & Tran, 2024; Shankar & Jebarajakirthy, 2023; Zhang & Zhang, 2023). In line with TAM theory, the perceived ease of use reduces cognitive effort and perceived risk, fostering higher intention to transact.

The Influence of Trust on Purchasing Decisions

Trust also significantly influences students' purchasing decisions on Shopee. When students perceive sellers as reliable, products as accurate to their descriptions, and transactions as secure, their willingness to purchase increases. This finding confirms

prior studies showing that trust is a central determinant of online purchasing behavior (McKnight, Choudhury, & Kacmar, 2002; Pavlou & Gefen, 2004; Wuan & Li, 2024; Wattoo & Ullah, 2025). Trust reduces uncertainty and perceived risk in digital transactions, providing assurance that buyers' expectations will be met, which is particularly important in e-commerce environments where physical inspection of products is not possible.

The Influence of Product Quality on Trust

Product quality was shown to positively affect trust in the Shopee platform. High-quality products, evaluated through performance, reliability, and aesthetics, increase users' confidence in both the product and the platform. This is consistent with previous research demonstrating that product quality enhances consumer trust in brands or marketplaces, as quality signals reduce perceived risk and foster credibility (Xiao & Benyoucef, 2021; Rosillo-Díaz & Santos, 2024; Zolfagharian & Lee, 2022; Zhao & Bhattacharya, 2024). Students are more likely to trust the platform when the products meet or exceed expectations, which in turn encourages repeat usage and loyalty.

The Effect of Ease of Use on Trust

Ease of use also positively influences trust. Platforms that are intuitive, easy to navigate, and efficient provide users with a sense of comfort and security, enhancing their confidence in using the system (Lee & Park, 2025; Yang & Li, 2022; Zhang & Zhang, 2023). Prior research has shown that perceived usability in digital systems contributes to trust formation, as users feel competent and less anxious about potential errors or transaction failures (Shankar & Jebarajakirthy, 2023; Wuan & Li, 2024). In this context, an easy-to-use interface indirectly strengthens purchasing intentions by building a trustworthy environment.

The Role of Trust in Mediating the Influence of Product Quality on Purchasing Decisions

Trust was found to partially mediate the relationship between product quality and purchasing decisions. This suggests that while product quality directly influences purchasing decisions, a portion of its effect is channeled through trust. High product quality enhances trust, which further reinforces the decision to purchase. This result is consistent with previous findings that identify trust as a critical mediator linking product quality and consumer purchase behavior in online marketplaces (Aurelia & Widiyanti, 2023; Rosillo-Díaz & Santos, 2024; Wuan & Li, 2024).

The Role of Trust in Mediating the Influence of Ease of Use on Purchasing Decisions

Trust fully mediates the effect of ease of use on purchasing decisions, indicating that ease of use alone does not directly lead to purchase decisions; rather, it enhances trust, which in turn drives the purchase. This finding corroborates prior studies emphasizing that trust is a key mechanism through which system usability impacts consumer behavior (Lee & Park, 2025; Shankar & Jebarajakirthy, 2023; Zhang & Zhang, 2023). An intuitive, user-friendly platform increases perceived security and reliability,

thereby establishing the trust necessary for consumers to make purchase decisions confidently.

Overall, these results underscore the critical role of product quality and ease of use in shaping trust, which ultimately drives purchasing decisions in e-commerce platforms like Shopee. By aligning with previous empirical evidence, this study reinforces the theoretical and practical significance of trust as a mediator in the online purchasing process (McKnight, Choudhury, & Kacmar, 2002; Pavlou & Gefen, 2004; Xiao & Benyoucef, 2021).

6. Conclusion

Based on the results of this study, several conclusions can be drawn. First, product quality positively influences students' purchasing decisions on the Shopee Marketplace, indicating that higher-quality products enhance consumer confidence and the likelihood of purchase. Second, ease of use also has a positive effect on purchasing decisions, demonstrating that intuitive, user-friendly platform features encourage students to transact more confidently. Third, trust significantly impacts purchasing decisions, highlighting its critical role in mediating consumer perceptions and reducing perceived risk. Furthermore, product quality and ease of use both positively affect trust, where high product standards and system usability enhance students' confidence in the Shopee platform. Trust was found to partially mediate the relationship between product quality and purchasing decisions, and fully mediate the effect of ease of use on purchasing decisions, emphasizing its central role in shaping online consumer behavior.

Future studies are recommended to expand the scope of participants beyond Master's students to include a wider demographic of online shoppers, allowing for more generalizable findings. Additionally, future research could investigate other potential mediating or moderating variables, such as perceived risk, customer satisfaction, or electronic word-of-mouth, to further understand the mechanisms influencing purchasing decisions in e-commerce platforms. Longitudinal studies could also be conducted to explore changes in consumer behavior over time, particularly as technology and digital platforms continue to evolve. These efforts would contribute to a deeper theoretical and practical understanding of factors driving online purchasing intentions and trust in digital marketplaces.

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