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The Influence Of Social Media Marketing On Purchasing Decisions Of Shopee Users In Surabaya

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Abstract

This study examines the effect of social media marketing on purchase decisions among Shopee users in Surabaya. It employed a quantitative associative approach. Data were collected through an online questionnaire using a five-point Likert scale from 40 Shopee users aged 18–30 who lived in Surabaya and were selected through purposive sampling. The data were analyzed using instrument tests, classical assumption tests, simple linear regression, a t-test, and the coefficient of determination with SPSS. The regression equation was Y = 4.560 + 1.056X. The t-statistic of 6.670 exceeded the critical value of 2.024, with a reported significance of 0.000 (p < 0.05), indicating a positive and significant effect of social media marketing on purchase decisions. The R-squared value of 0.539 indicates that social media marketing explains 53.9% of the variance in purchase decisions, while 46.1% is associated with factors outside the model. The connecting indicator had the lowest mean score (2.95), suggesting that interaction and response to users require improvement.

Keywords: social media marketing; purchasing decisions; Shopee; Surabaya.

INTRODUCTION

Advances in information and communication technology are changing the way companies introduce products, convey information, and interact with consumers. Social media platforms like Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube are not only communication tools but also promotional channels, enabling companies to share content and build two-way interactions with potential buyers. In an e-commerce environment, promotional information, consumer reviews, and digital communications can become part of the pre-purchase considerations.

Shopee is an e-commerce platform that actively utilizes digital promotions and social media. For consumers, information found on social media can help them

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identify needs, research products, and compare product alternatives. However, exposure to promotions doesn't always result in a purchase, so the influence of social media marketing on purchasing decisions needs to be examined within the context of specific users.

In such situations, social media plays a role not only as a platform for advertising but also as a platform for consumers to gain an initial understanding of a product. Content in the form of photos, videos, reviews, and demonstrations can help consumers understand a product's benefits before opening the app and making a purchase. Clearly presented information has the potential to reduce uncertainty, especially when consumers cannot inspect the product in person as they would in a face-to-face transaction.

On the other hand, the abundance of promotional content circulating leaves consumers faced with a variety of information. Consumers may be attracted to a product based on the content's appearance, but their final decision is still influenced by an assessment of need, price, benefits, and the credibility of the information received. Therefore, the relationship between social media marketing and purchasing decisions needs to be understood as a data-driven relationship, not as the assumption that every promotional exposure will result in a transaction.

Gunelius (2011) outlined four indicators of social media marketing: content creation, content sharing, connecting, and community building. Meanwhile, Kotler and Keller (2016) described the stages of a purchasing decision process through need recognition, information search, alternative evaluation, purchase decision, and post-purchase behavior. Several previous studies discussed in this thesis, including Mileva and Fauzi (2018), Bilgin (2018), Kurniasari and Budiatmo (2018), and Ichsan, Respatiningsih, and Arini (2025), serve as the basis for examining the relationship between the two variables among Shopee users in Surabaya.

These four indicators demonstrate that social media marketing activities have several complementary aspects. Engaging content can be a starting point for attention, while content dissemination broadens the reach of information. Interaction helps consumers ask questions or seek clarification, while communities can provide a space for sharing experiences. Therefore, assessing social media marketing requires more than just the frequency of content publication; it also requires attention to the relevance of the content and the quality of the relationships built with users.

Based on this description, this study aims to analyze whether social media marketing influences purchasing decisions among Shopee users in Surabaya. The study positions social media marketing as the independent variable (X) and purchasing decisions as the dependent variable (Y).

This research is important because purchasing decisions on e-commerce

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platforms are a process involving digital information and consumers' personal considerations. Focusing on Shopee users in Surabaya provides a clear boundary for testing the relationship between the two variables and helps us understand how social media marketing impacts purchasing decisions among the studied group of respondents. The research findings are expected to provide initial considerations for digital marketing managers, while addressing the limitations of the sample size and characteristics.

Furthermore, research on users in specific regions can help place the analysis results in a more targeted context. Consumer characteristics, shopping experiences, and social media habits can differ across groups. Therefore, the results of this study are not intended to represent all digital consumer behavior, but rather to provide an empirical picture based on predetermined respondent criteria. This limitation is important to ensure that the research's benefits remain aligned with the actual data obtained.

LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Social Media Marketing

Social media marketing is a marketing and promotional activity through social media channels to convey product information, build relationships with consumers, increase engagement, and support purchasing decisions. According to Gunelius (2011), the indicators include: (1) content creation, namely the creation of interesting and informative content; (2) content sharing, namely the distribution of content to users; (3) connecting, namely building communication and relationships with consumers; and (4) community building, namely forming a community of users with similar interests.

2. Buying decision

Purchasing decisions are the process by which consumers make product choices after considering their needs and available information. The indicators used, according to Kotler and Keller (2016), consist of five stages: need recognition, information search, alternative evaluation, purchase decision, and post-purchase behavior.

3. Hypothesis

The research hypothesis states that social media marketing influences purchasing decisions among Shopee users in Surabaya. Testing was conducted at a 5% significance level using a t-test on the regression coefficient.

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RESEARCH METHODS

This research used a quantitative, associative approach. Primary data was obtained through a closed-ended questionnaire distributed online using Google Forms. Each statement was measured on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

The study population was Shopee app users aged 18–30 years who resided in Surabaya. The sample was selected using purposive sampling based on the following criteria: resided in Surabaya, had a Shopee account, had made at least one transaction through Shopee, were aged 18–30 years, and were active social media users. Forty complete responses were analyzed.

The social media marketing variable (X) was measured through content creation, content sharing, connecting, and community building. The purchasing decision variable (Y) was measured through need recognition, information search, alternative evaluation, purchasing decision, and post-purchase behavior. The analysis was conducted using SPSS through validity, reliability, classical assumptions, simple linear regression, t-test, and coefficient of determination tests.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Variable description

Based on the descriptive results in the thesis, the social media marketing variable has an average of 12.82 with a standard deviation of 4.390, while the purchasing decision has an average of 18.10 with a standard deviation of 6.312. The average social media marketing indicator is 3.21. Community building obtained the highest average of 3.68, while connecting was the lowest indicator at 2.95. In the purchasing decision variable, the overall average indicator was 3.62; the highest information search was 3.82 and the lowest alternative evaluation was 3.45.

Instrument Testing and Classical Assumptions

The validity test shows that the correlation value of the nine indicators is in the range of 0.830–0.920, greater than the r table of 0.3120, so that all indicators are declared valid according to the criteria used in the thesis. The Cronbach's Alpha value is 0.870 for social media marketing, 0.946 for purchasing decisions, and 0.940 for all nine indicators; all exceeding the threshold of 0.60.

The Kolmogorov–Smirnov normality test yielded an Asymp. Sig. of 0.243, greater than 0.05. The Tolerance and VIF values were each 1.000. An examination of the scatterplot in the thesis concluded that no heteroscedasticity pattern was visible. The Durbin–Watson value of 1.551 was between dU = 1.5440 and 4 − dU = 2.4560, so according to the criteria used, the model was declared to show no

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autocorrelation.

Regression and Hypothesis Testing

Simple linear regression analysis produces the equation Y = 4.560 + 1.056X. The regression coefficient is positive, indicating that a one-unit increase in social media marketing scores is associated with a 1.056-unit increase in purchasing decision scores. The t-test results show a calculated t of 6.670, greater than the t-table of 2.024, with a significance value reported by SPSS of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$). Thus, the hypothesis regarding the positive and significant influence of social media marketing on purchasing decisions is supported by the analysis results.

An R value of 0.734 indicates a strong relationship in the tested model. An R Square value of 0.539 means that 53.9% of the variation in purchasing decisions can be explained by social media marketing, while the remaining 46.1% is related to other factors outside the research model.

The research results show that social media marketing has a positive and significant influence on the purchasing decisions of Shopee users in Surabaya. This finding aligns with the theoretical framework that positions social media as an information source and interaction space that can help consumers evaluate products before purchasing. Promotional content, information dissemination, and user communities can support the consumer journey from information search to purchasing decision.

Descriptive findings also show that community building achieved the highest average score, at 3.68, while connecting achieved the lowest average score, at 2.95. This difference can be interpreted as an indication that the community-building aspect is considered relatively better than the direct interaction aspect. Communities can help share experiences and information among users, but their presence still needs to be balanced with responsive communication to ensure individual questions are not overlooked. This interpretation is contextual and requires further study with data that specifically explores user experiences.

When linked to the purchasing decision framework, a relatively high information search score can be understood as a sign that information is a crucial part of the consumer's pre-purchase experience. However, information searches don't always end with selecting a promoted product. Consumers may still compare several options or delay a purchase if the information they receive doesn't meet their needs. Therefore, the quality of marketing communications should be assessed by their ability to help consumers understand the product, not simply by their ability to quickly capture their attention.

For the purchasing decision variable, information search achieved the highest

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average score of 3.82, while alternative evaluation had the lowest average score of 3.45. This pattern suggests that respondents gave a relatively positive assessment of information search, while the process of comparing alternatives warrants further exploration. In the context of online shopping, consumers can find a wealth of product information, but still need to assess the suitability of benefits, price, and needs before making a choice. Therefore, good marketing information should help consumers understand the product adequately, not simply stimulate fleeting attention.

The link between information search and alternative evaluation shows that the purchasing decision process doesn't end when consumers encounter promotional content. The information obtained still needs to be compared with their needs and other available options. In this context, informative content can serve as a support for consideration, while unclear claims can potentially increase doubt. This study did not specifically measure information quality or consumer trust levels, so these two aspects could be the direction of future research.

The instrument test results and classical assumptions reported in the study support the continuation of the regression analysis based on the criteria used. However, statistical results must be considered within the limitations of the research design. The sample consisted of 40 purposively selected respondents, so the results are best understood as a depiction of the relationships within groups that met the research criteria. This study cannot guarantee that the same patterns will be found across all Shopee users in Surabaya or across different age groups and regions.

From an implementation perspective, the research results can be used as initial evaluation material for those managing Shopee's marketing communications and sellers utilizing social media to promote their products. Evaluation can be conducted by reviewing whether the content answers common consumer questions, whether product information is easy to find, and whether responses are consistent. These steps should be treated as recommendations that need to be evaluated, rather than as causal conclusions, which were tested separately in this study.

These results also serve as a reminder that digital marketing needs to consider the entire consumer journey. In the initial stages, content can capture attention and spark a need to learn more. Afterward, consumers weigh the available information before making a decision. Because each stage serves a distinct purpose, marketing strategies should deliver consistent, easy-to-understand information and provide users with opportunities for clarification when needed. In this way, social media marketing can support the decision-making process more effectively.

Although the test results show a significant effect, this study has limitations that require consideration. The limited number of respondents and purposive sampling require caution when generalizing the results. Furthermore, the simple

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regression model only examines the relationship between one independent variable and one dependent variable, thus failing to describe the possibility of more complex relationships. Future research could use a larger sample size and an analytical model appropriate to the research objectives to gain a more comprehensive understanding.

Considering these limitations, the research findings should be positioned as preliminary evidence supporting the importance of social media marketing, while also opening up space for more in-depth testing. Further research can be expanded by comparing content types, interaction patterns, or user characteristics, as long as each variable is clearly formulated and measured using adequate instruments. This approach can help clarify which aspects of social media marketing are most closely related to purchasing decisions, without immediately assuming that all forms of digital promotion have the same impact.

A positive regression coefficient indicates that an increase in social media marketing scores is followed by an increase in purchase decision scores in this research model. This finding supports the hypothesis that social media marketing activities can be a source of consumer considerations when making choices. However, the regression coefficient should be interpreted within the scope of the analysis used. This figure indicates a pattern of relationships in the respondent data, not a guarantee that marketing changes of a certain magnitude will always result in the same change in purchase decisions for every consumer.

The R Square value of 0.539 also needs to be interpreted proportionally. This means that the social media marketing variable in the model is able to explain 53.9% of the variation in purchasing decision scores in the analyzed sample. The remaining 46.1% indicates variation that is not explained by the model, so purchasing decisions are not appropriate if understood solely based on social media activity. Other considerations such as price, product quality, consumer needs, trust in the seller, ease of transaction, and shopping experience could be possible factors worth testing in future research. These factors represent opportunities for research development, not variables whose influence has been proven by the current analysis.

However, the connecting indicator achieved the lowest average (2.95). These results indicate that communication and two-way relationships are areas that require greater attention. Companies can consider improving response times to user questions or comments and maintaining informative and relevant content. Interpretation of the results should be limited to the characteristics of the sample, which consisted of 40 purposively selected respondents; these findings do not necessarily represent all Shopee users in Surabaya.

The low average connecting rate compared to other indicators is an important consideration when interpreting the descriptive results. A score of 2.95 indicates that

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the relationship and interaction aspect with users hasn't received as high a rating as other indicators in the social media marketing variable. This doesn't necessarily mean all communication has failed, but rather suggests that the interaction experience can still be improved. In digital marketing, engaging content is more meaningful when users also have a space to ask questions, express opinions, and receive clear responses.

Practically, strengthening connection can be achieved through more consistent responses to questions and comments, using easily understood language, and conveying information that avoids misinterpretation. Relevant responses can also help consumers continue their information search and evaluation of alternatives. However, these recommendations represent practical implications of the lowest-scoring indicators; this study did not separately test the effectiveness of each of these measures.

It's also important to distinguish between promotional reach and communication quality. Widespread content may not necessarily address every user's information needs. Conversely, clear and relevant communication can help consumers better understand the information available. Therefore, a social media strategy should ideally focus not only on post frequency or visible interactions, but also on whether the information is useful to consumers in evaluating a product.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that social media marketing has a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions among Shopee users in Surabaya. This is indicated by the regression equation Y = 4.560 + 1.056X and the t-test result of 6.670 with a significance level of 0.000. The R Square value of 0.539 indicates that 53.9% of the variation in purchasing decisions can be explained by social media marketing, while the remaining 46.1% is explained by factors outside the model.

Practically, Shopee is advised to maintain the quality and frequency of informative content and strengthen communication with users, particularly on the connecting indicator. Future research could involve a larger sample size and consider other variables, such as price, product quality, personal needs, seller trust, or shopping experience, while still testing these variables through empirical data.

Thus, the research findings emphasize the importance of managing social media marketing as a series of activities encompassing content quality, information dissemination, interaction, and community strengthening. Particular attention to connecting is relevant because this indicator received the lowest average score in this study. Improvement efforts should be directed at the quality of communication

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with users and accompanied by regular evaluation to ensure that the implemented strategy aligns with consumer needs.

This conclusion still needs to be interpreted in light of the study's scope, which included 40 Shopee users aged 18–30 years residing in Surabaya, selected through purposive sampling. Further research could expand the number and characteristics of respondents, compare different user groups, or incorporate other relevant variables. Such developments could help further explain the factors associated with purchasing decisions and test the consistency of the study's findings across broader contexts.

Overall, the research results provide empirical support for the hypothesis that social media marketing has a positive and significant influence on purchasing decisions in the sample studied. The primary implication is not that social media marketing is the sole determinant of purchasing decisions, but rather that this activity plays a significant role and needs to be managed in conjunction with an understanding of consumer needs. When interpreted in a balanced manner, the results of this study can serve as a starting point for refining marketing strategies and developing broader research.

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