

THE MEDIATING ROLE OF ONLINE CUSTOMER REVIEWS ON PURCHASE DECISIONS: EXPLORING THE IMPACT OF LIVE SHOPPING FEATURES AND CONTENT MARKETING

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Abstract

The advancement of the digital age has transformed consumer behavior. However, alongside the convenience of information accessibility and the rise of e-commerce platforms such as TikTok Shop, a new paradox has arisen in the purchase decision-making process. Interactive elements such as live shopping and content marketing provide a more intriguing and compelling shopping experience. Conversely, buyers see an overwhelming amount of information that is not necessarily reliable, casting doubt on the legitimacy of items and user evaluations. This study seeks to examine the impact of live shopping features and content marketing on the purchasing decisions of TikTok Shop customers, with online customer reviews serving as a mediating variable that may enhance or diminish this effect. The used methodology is a quantitative approach utilizing Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) via SmartPLS 4, based on a sample of 355 respondents who are TikTok Shop customers in West Java. The research findings indicate that while the live shopping feature and content marketing substantially impact purchase decisions, customer trust remains heavily influenced by the quality and trustworthiness of online customer reviews.

Keywords: Live shopping feature, content marketing, online customer reviews, purchase decisions, TikTok shop

INTRODUCTION

The development of digital transformation has driven the emergence of increasingly innovative e-commerce platforms, one of which is TikTok Shop. This platform combines the concept of short video-based social media with live shopping features, creating a more interactive, real-time shopping experience that is integrated with entertainment content (Geng et al., 2020). Meanwhile, another study by Peralta et al. (2025) found that shopping through live streaming differs from traditional online shopping in several ways. In traditional online shopping, buyers can only view products through images and text. In contrast, live shopping is more engaging due to the interaction between sellers and buyers. In Indonesia, the live shopping feature has been adopted by various e-commerce platforms, such as Shopee Live, Tokopedia Play, and TikTok Shop, which have proven to increase transaction intensity and consumer trust. For example, Shopee reported a sales increase of up to 3.5 times through Shopee Live during the COVID-19 pandemic (CNNIndonesia, 2021). On the other hand, TikTok Shop combines the power of short video-based social media with live shopping features, providing a unique experience that encourages quick and real-time purchasing decisions (Deva et al., 2024).

However, the rapid growth of e-commerce is also accompanied by new challenges, particularly related to the increasing practice of manipulating customer reviews on various platforms, including TikTok Shop. These manipulations include fake reviews, inaccurate information, and product rating engineering that can undermine consumer trust (Fernandes et al., 2022). Research by Kamal et al.

(2023) even identified a discrepancy between the high product ratings and the actual product quality, leading to consumer doubts in the purchasing decision-making process. As an effort to address the issue of review manipulation, e-commerce actors are expected to implement marketing strategies that can organically enhance the credibility of reviews. One of the strategies considered effective is the optimization of the live shopping feature, which allows direct interaction between sellers, influencers, and potential consumers, thereby creating transparency, building trust, and improving the quality of online reviews (Wongkitrungrueng & Assarut, 2020).

A study by Zhang (2024) revealed that the shopping experience through live shopping can enhance consumer emotional engagement while providing more comprehensive product information, thereby making it easier for consumers to make purchasing decisions. On the other hand, live shopping enhances the shopping experience and serves as an effective means of generating more authentic online reviews. Direct interaction, real-time product demonstrations, and influencer engagement during live shopping sessions contribute to the increased trust levels and quality of reviews provided by consumers (Geng et al., 2020).

Additionally, content marketing also plays an important role in building the credibility of online customer reviews. Through the use of social media and influencers, content marketing can create a positive image of the product, increase consumer trust, and encourage consumers to provide more honest and positive reviews (Putri et al., 2025). In the context of e-commerce, the right content marketing strategy not only contributes to the increase in the quantity and quality of online reviews but also strengthens brand awareness, influences consumer perception, and enhances purchase intention, which ultimately impacts purchasing decisions (Mubarrak et al., 2023). Online customer reviews become a key variable that bridges the relationship between live shopping features and content marketing on consumer purchasing decisions. Credibility, relevance, and the quality of information contained in online reviews have been proven to enhance consumer trust and facilitate the decision-making process, especially on platforms like TikTok Shop (Kamal et al., 2023).

However, several previous studies have shown a research gap regarding the mediating role of online customer reviews in the relationship between live shopping features, content marketing, and purchase decisions, particularly on the TikTok Shop platform. Previous studies found that online customer reviews are the main reference for consumers in making purchase decisions, as they are considered a credible and trustworthy form of electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM) (Fernandes et al., 2022). On the other hand, there are empirical findings that show not all online reviews have a significant impact on purchasing decisions, depending on aspects such as source credibility, review volume, and the relevance of the review content (Kamal et al., 2023). Most studies still examine these variables separately, so the interrelation of all three in a comprehensive model has not been extensively researched (Geng et al., 2020).

The research offers several novelties, the first of which discusses the role of live shopping features and content marketing, particularly on TikTok Shop. Second, this study differs from previous research, which generally examines each variable separately or in the context of conventional e-commerce. Third, this research analyzes the mediating role of online customer reviews on the influence of live shopping features and content marketing on purchasing decisions, specifically among users of TikTok Shop social commerce.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Live Shopping Feature

The live shopping feature is understood as a live broadcast-based e-commerce innovation that combines online transactions with real-time interaction between sellers and consumers. Through this feature, consumers can observe live product demonstrations, interact, and obtain more authentic information, thereby enhancing an immersive and interactive shopping experience (Wongkitrungrueng & Assarut, 2020; Zhang, 2024). In the social commerce ecosystem, like TikTok Shop, live shopping not only enhances trust but also serves as an effective two-way communication

channel in building product transparency and credibility (Addison & Aprilianty, 2022; Damanik et al., 2024). Nevertheless, the phenomenon of review manipulation remains a challenge that can obscure consumer perceptions of products, making it important to examine the integration of live shopping with other sources of information, such as online customer reviews (Hossain et al., 2023).

Content Marketing

Content marketing is defined as a content-based marketing strategy aimed at building consumer engagement through the consistent presentation of relevant, educational, and engaging information (Terho et al., 2022). On social commerce platforms like TikTok Shop, content marketing is executed in various formats, such as short videos, storytelling, and collaborations with influencers, to shape brand image, increase trust, and drive purchase decisions (Geng et al., 2020; Salma Salsabila Lestari et al., 2024). Previous research shows that the effectiveness of content marketing can be enhanced if supported by credible online customer reviews, as consumer reviews serve as social validation that more objectively influences product perception (Fernandes et al., 2022; Mubarrak et al., 2023).

Online Customer Reviews

Online customer reviews (OCR) represent one form of electronic word-of-mouth that provides information on previous consumer experiences related to products or services, whether in the form of text, ratings, or comments during live shopping sessions (Elwalda et al., 2016; Kamal et al., 2023). Credibility, valence, volume, and the quality of arguments in reviews are the main factors that determine the influence of OCR on purchasing decisions (Dewi Sudrajat et al., 2024; Guo et al., 2020). However, review manipulation, such as fake reviews or inauthentic reviews, remains a significant issue on e-commerce platforms, including TikTok Shop, making efforts to strengthen review validity crucial in building consumer trust (Damanik et al., 2024; Fernandes et al., 2022).

Purchase Decision

The purchase decision is the final result of the information processing, alternative evaluation, and consumer consideration before making a transaction (Hsu et al., 2017; Mubarrak et al., 2023). In the context of modern e-commerce, purchasing decisions are influenced by external factors such as seller credibility, product information, live shopping experiences, and available online customer reviews (Addison & Aprilianty, 2022; Zhang, 2024). Especially in TikTok Shop, the shopping experience becomes increasingly complex due to the integration of entertainment content, real-time interactions, and consumer reviews that influence each other in shaping consumer perceptions before making a purchase decision (Peralta et al., 2025).

HYPOTHESIS FORMULATION

Live Shopping Feature on Purchase Decision

As a result of digital transformation, live shopping features have emerged as an e-commerce innovation that gives customers a more immersive, interactive, and integrated shopping experience by enabling real-time product promotion and transactions through live broadcasts (Addison & Aprilianty, 2022; Saputra & Fadhilah, 2022). However, widespread manipulation of customer reviews has also coincided with the growth of live shopping, which leads to information bias, erodes trust, and interferes with the rationality of buying decisions, particularly on platforms such as TikTok Shop (Hossain et al., 2023; Puspitarini et al., 2024). Even while live shopping features improve engagement and the purchasing experience, prior research indicates that manipulative reviews still have the ability to skew consumer impression (Addison & Aprilianty, 2022). However, research on the combination of live shopping, content marketing, and customer evaluations is still scarce, especially when considering TikTok Shop as an entertainment-based social commerce platform (Qu et al., 2023). Although consumers are exposed to both simultaneously during the decision-making process, the majority of prior research isolated variables like brand trust or product quality without taking into account the simultaneous influence of content-based promotions and customer reviews in the dynamic live shopping ecosystem (Hossain et al., 2023).

H1: The live shopping feature has a positive impact on purchase decisions.

Live Shopping Feature on Online Customer Reviews

Review manipulation in e-commerce has become a crucial challenge that hinders the formation of consumer trust, as non-objective or fake reviews can create product perception distortions and disrupt purchasing decisions (Dewi Sudrajat et al., 2024). The live shopping feature offers a potential solution by providing real-time interaction, allowing consumers to obtain authentic information through product demonstrations and direct dialogue during the broadcast (Damanik et al., 2024). Although live shopping has been proven to increase trust and purchase intention (Rizieq Hentihu & Jayadi, 2024), its influence on purchase decisions still shows inconsistent results, similar to findings related to the role of online customer reviews as e-WOM in influencing consumer decisions (Ghoni & Soliha, 2022). However, despite TikTok Shop's notable growth in Indonesia, particularly among Gen Z, and its distinctive interaction features based on personalization algorithms and amateur hosts, there are still few studies on the integration of live shopping and the creation of online customer reviews on the platform (Peralta et al., 2025).

H2: The live shopping feature has a positive impact on online customer reviews.

Content Marketing on Purchase Decision

In the competitive digital era, content marketing has become a crucial strategy for building competitiveness by prioritizing informative, educational, and engaging content to enhance consumer engagement sustainably (Salminen et al., 2019; Terho et al., 2022). On e-commerce and social commerce platforms, content marketing not only shapes brand perception and trust but also drives purchasing decisions, especially when personalized through algorithms that align with audience characteristics (Geng et al., 2020; Gregoriades et al., 2021). TikTok Shop adopts content marketing in the form of short videos, storytelling, and live shopping, creating real-time experiences that influence consumer purchase intentions and decisions (Zhang, 2024). However, the effectiveness of this strategy is often hindered by the rampant manipulation of consumer reviews, which obscures perceptions of the product and diminishes trust (Salminen et al., 2019; Zhu et al., 2017). Although customer reviews play a crucial role in enhancing the impact of content marketing, there is still a lack of empirical studies that integrate the relationship between marketing content, perceptions of online reviews, and purchase decisions, particularly in the TikTok Shop ecosystem, which is rich in entertainment elements, real-time interaction, and user-generated content (Salma Salsabila Lestari et al., 2024).

H3: Content marketing has a positive influence on purchase decisions.

Content Marketing on Online Customer Reviews

In the digital economy ecosystem, content marketing has become a primary strategy to influence consumer behavior through the presentation of informative, relevant, and engaging content to build a positive perception and increase consumer engagement (Terho et al., 2022). Its effectiveness becomes even more optimal when combined with algorithm-based personalization, as implemented by TikTok Shop through short videos, storytelling, live shopping, and collaborations with influencers (Geng et al., 2020; Salminen et al., 2019). However, the presence of online customer reviews (OCR) plays a dual role as external validation that can either strengthen or weaken the impact of content marketing, depending on the quality and authenticity of the available reviews (Fernandes et al., 2022; Guo et al., 2020; Zhu et al., 2017). Review manipulation remains a significant barrier that undermines consumer trust and reduces the effectiveness of content strategies (Hanaysha, 2022). Additionally, purchase decisions in social commerce are influenced by the mechanism of social learning, where consumers observe other users' reviews as a reference (Chen et al., 2017).

H4: Content marketing has a positive effect on online customer reviews.

Online Customer Reviews on Purchase Decision

In the e-commerce ecosystem, online customer reviews (OCR) become a credible source of information that influences purchasing decisions by presenting real consumer experiences related to products, services, and trust in sellers (Elwalda et al., 2016; Hsu et al., 2017). On platforms like

TikTok Shop, online customer reviews (OCR) are directly integrated with promotional content, such as live shopping and short videos, thus playing a crucial role in building consumer confidence (Zhang, 2024). However, the prevalence of review manipulation, such as fake reviews or perception engineering, decreases consumer trust and obscures rational decision-making (Damanik et al., 2024; Guo et al., 2020). Although the role of OCR has been extensively studied, most research is still limited to conventional e-commerce platforms such as Shopee or Tokopedia (Kamal et al., 2023). In fact, TikTok Shop presents a unique interaction dynamic through a combination of entertainment, creative content, and live shopping, which makes consumer patterns in processing reviews more complex (Nilashi et al., 2021).

H5: Online customer reviews have a positive influence on purchase decisions.

The Mediating Role of Online Customer Reviews

Online customer reviews (OCR) serve as a mediating mechanism that strengthens the influence of live shopping features on purchasing decisions, especially on platforms like TikTok Shop that offer real-time interaction and direct product demonstrations (Addison & Aprilianty, 2022). The presence of reviews, whether in the form of text, ratings, or comments during live shopping sessions, provides additional validation that enhances consumer trust in the promoted products, thereby encouraging more confident purchasing decisions (Xiao et al., 2022). Similarly, OCR can strengthen the influence of content marketing on purchasing decisions by providing social validation that complements consumer exposure to creative promotional content such as short videos, storytelling, or influencer reviews on TikTok Shop (Peralta et al., 2025). Authenticity, quality, and credibility of reviews are the main determinants in building consumer confidence in the messages conveyed through content marketing, so a combination of engaging content and credible reviews can enhance purchase intentions and realizations (Fernandes et al., 2022; Guo et al., 2020).

H6: Online customer reviews mediate the influence of live shopping features on purchase decisions.

H7: Online customer reviews mediate the influence of content marketing on purchase decisions.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research analyzes 7 hypotheses related to the influence of live shopping features and content marketing on purchasing decisions through online customer reviews. The analysis in this study was conducted quantitatively using the structural equation model (SEM) method. The population in this study consists of TikTok Shop users in West Java, specifically in Cirebon Regency, totaling 3,111. From the population in this study, a sample was taken using the purposive sampling method, resulting in 355 respondents. Data in this study were collected through the distribution of questionnaires to respondents. The results of the questionnaire distribution were then analyzed using the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) method with SmartPLS 4. There are four variables analyzed in this study, namely live shopping features, content marketing, online customer reviews, and purchase decisions, along with their measurement indicators as follows:

Table 1. Measure Variable

Variable	Measuring Indicators	Measuring Indicators
Live Shopping Feature (Wongkitrungrueng & Assarut, 2020)	Feature	Interaction features in live shopping
	Mobile Shopping App	Application navigation is easy to understand
	Commercialization Model	Interesting commercialization
	Number of Live Shopping Viewers	High engagement live shopping
Content Marketing (Salma Salsabila Lestari et al., 2024)	Reader Cognition	Reader's level of understanding
	Sharing Motivation	Desire to share motivation for readers
	Persuasion	Clarity of argument
	Decision Making	Decisions based on judgment

Variable	Measuring Indicators	Measuring Indicators
Online Customer Reviews (Kamal et al., 2023)	Factor	Economic status and consumer style
	Perceived Usefulness	Ease of decision making through reviews
	Source Creadibility	Trust in reviews sources
	Argument Quality	Rationality of argument in reviews
	Valance	Balance of positive and negative reviews
Purchase Decisions (Mubarrak et al., 2023)	Volume of Reviews	The total number of reviews available
	Product Choice	The influence of information on product
	Brand Choice	Brand reputation in the market
	The Choice of Dealer or Seller	Seller credibility
	Number of Purchase	Frequency of product purchases
	Time of Purchase	Influence of external factors on purchase time
	Payment Method	Ease of payment methods

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Outer Model Analysis

The outer model analysis in Smart-PLS aims to test the ability of indicators to represent their variables. This analysis includes convergent validity and construct validity and reliability. The first test is convergent validity to examine the validity of the indicators in this study. The criterion used in this test is a loading factor value > 0.7 . The results of the analysis are shown in the table as follows:

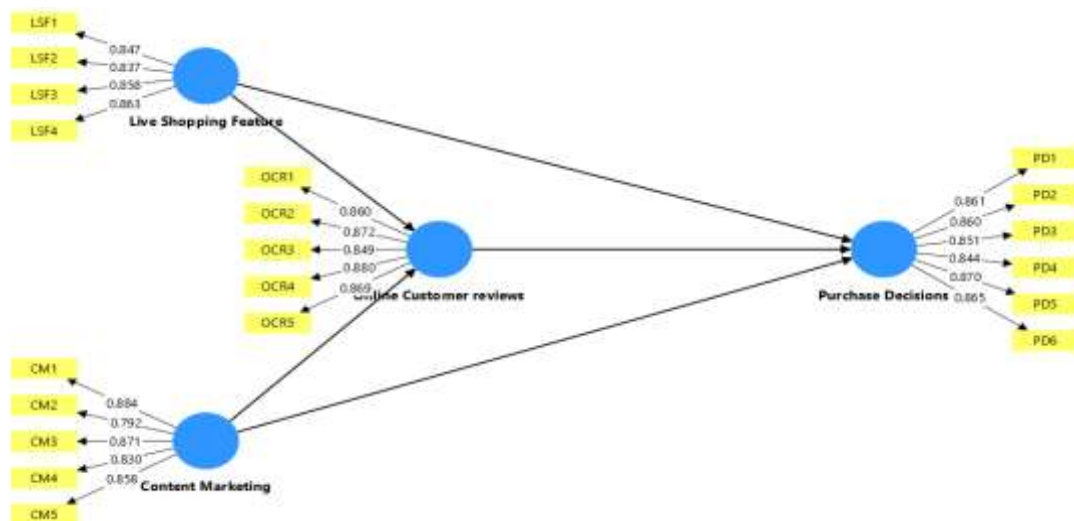


Figure 1. Convergent Validity

Table 2. Loading Factor

Indicators	Loading Factors	Validity
LSF1	0.847	Valid
LSF2	0.837	Valid
LSF3	0.858	Valid
LSF4	0.863	Valid

Indicators	Loading Factors	Validity
CM1	0.884	Valid
CM2	0.792	Valid
CM3	0.871	Valid
CM4	0.830	Valid
CM5	0.858	Valid
OCR1	0.860	Valid
OCR2	0.872	Valid
OCR3	0.849	Valid
OCR4	0.880	Valid
OCR5	0.869	Valid
PD1	0.861	Valid
PD2	0.860	Valid
PD3	0.851	Valid
PD4	0.844	Valid
PD5	0.870	Valid
PD6	0.865	Valid

Table 2 shows the results of convergent validity and indicates that all indicators in this study have a loading factor value > 0.7 and can be concluded as valid. Valid indicators indicate that validity can be interpreted as the instrument being valid if there is a similarity between the collected data and the actual data occurring in the object being studied.

The results indicate that all indicators have accurately measured their variables, so the data in this study can be used for subsequent analyses. The next outer model analysis is construct validity and construct reliability to test the validity and reliability of the variables. This study analyzes 4 variables with the tests shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Construct Validity And Construct Realibility

Variable	Composite reliability (ρ_c)	Average variance extracted (AVE)
Live Shopping Feature	0.913	0.725
Content Marketing	0.927	0.719
Online Customer reviews	0.938	0.750
Purchase Decisions	0.944	0.737

Table 3 shows the results of the construct validity and reliability tests. The criterion used is that validity requires the variable to have a composite reliability value of 0.7. The analysis results show that all variables have met the criteria, making all variables valid and reliable. The results indicate that this research has met all outer model tests and can proceed to the inner model analysis.

Inner Model Analysis

The inner model analysis aims to analyze the influence between variables and the goodness-of-fit test. The stages in the inner model analysis are the determination coefficient (R-square) test, the goodness-of-fit test, and the hypothesis or path analysis test. The first analysis is the coefficient of determination to determine the magnitude of the influence of independent variables on the dependent variable. The results of the analysis are shown in Table 4.

Table 4. R-square

Variable	R-square
Online customer reviews	0.763
Purchase decisions	0.760

Table 4 shows that this study has 2 dependent variables, namely online customer reviews and purchase decisions. It is known that online customer reviews are influenced by independent variables by 0.763, and purchase decisions are influenced by independent variables by 0.760.

The next test is the goodness of fit to assess the model's feasibility in this study. The goodness-of-fit test is the square root of the average value and R-squared. The criteria used are medium goodness of fit if the value is > 0.25 and large goodness of fit if the value is > 0.36 . The analysis results are shown in Table 5.

Table 5. Goodness of fit

Variable	Average variance extracted (AVE)	R-square
Live Shopping Feature	0.725	
Content Marketing	0.719	
Online Customer reviews	0.750	0,763
Purchase Decisions	0.737	0,760
Average	0,733	0,762
GOF	0,747	

Table 5 shows a Gof value of $0.747 > 0.36$, thus concluding that this research model demonstrates a high Gof value. This result indicates that the model has good feasibility.

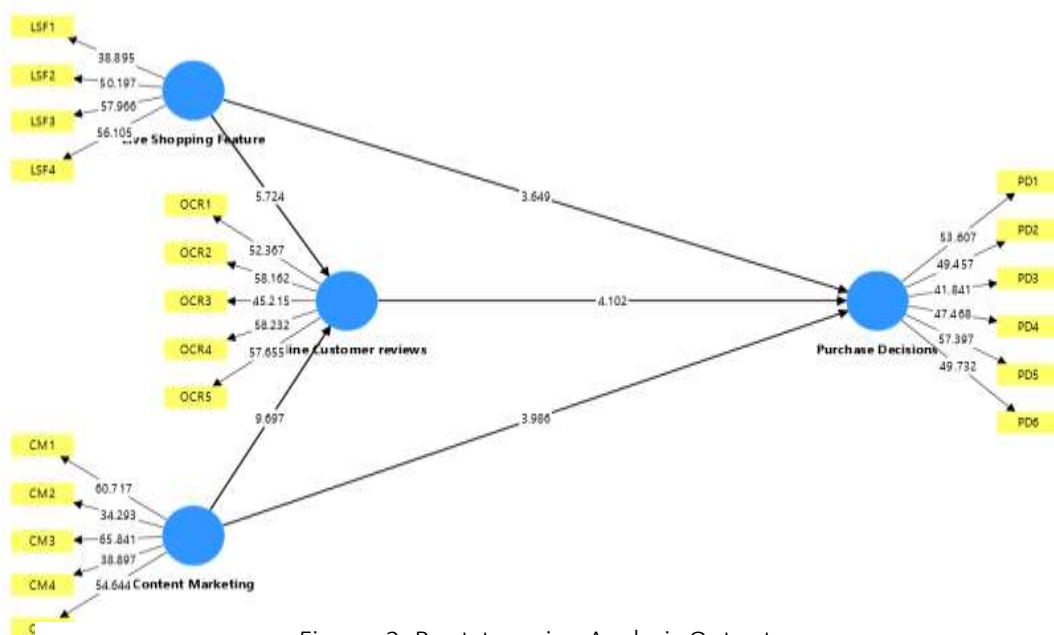


Figure 2. Bootstrapping Analysis Output

The next analysis is hypothesis testing conducted using bootstrapping analysis in Smart PLS software. The analysis results are shown in Table 6.

Table 6. Path Analysis

Variable	Original sample	T statistics	P Values	Results
Live Shopping Feature -> Purchase Decisions	0,267	3,649	0,000	H1 Supported
Live Shopping Feature -> Online Customer reviews	0,346	5,724	0,000	H2 Supported
Content Marketing -> Purchase Decisions	0,307	3,986	0,000	H3 Supported
Content Marketing -> Online Customer reviews	0,587	9,697	0,000	H4 Supported
Online Customer reviews -> Purchase Decisions	0,365	4,102	0,000	H5 Supported
Live Shopping Feature -> Online Customer reviews -> Purchase Decisions	0,126	3,503	0,000	H6 Supported
Content Marketing -> Online Customer reviews -> Purchase Decisions	0,214	3,545	0,000	H7 Supported

Table 6 shows the results of hypothesis testing in this study. Hypothesis testing uses the criterion of a positive influence value if the estimate value is positive. Furthermore, the significance value uses the criterion of significance if the t-statistic value is > 1.96 and the P-value is < 0.05 .

1. The test results show that live shopping on online customer reviews has a t-statistic value of $3.649 > 1.96$ and a P-value of $0.000 < 0.05$; thus, H1 is supported.
2. On the other hand, the analysis found that live shopping features on purchasing decisions have a positive effect with a t-statistic value of $5.724 > 1.96$ and a P-value of $0.000 < 0.05$; thus, H2 is supported.
3. Additionally, the test results show that content marketing on purchasing decisions has a positive effect with a t-statistic value of $3.986 > 1.96$ and a P-value of $0.000 < 0.05$; thus, H3 is supported.
4. For the test results of content marketing on online customer reviews, it has a positive effect with a t-statistic value of $9.697 > 1.96$ and a P-value of $0.000 < 0.05$; thus, H4 is supported.
5. On the other hand, the test results of online customer reviews on purchasing decisions have a positive effect with a t-statistic value of $4.102 > 1.96$ and a P-value of $0.000 < 0.05$; thus, H5 is supported.
6. The test results of live shopping features on purchasing decisions through online customer reviews have a positive effect with a t-statistic value of $3.503 > 1.96$ and a P-value of $0.000 < 0.05$; thus, H6 is supported.
7. Furthermore, the test results of content marketing on purchasing decisions through online customer reviews have a positive effect with a t-statistic value of $3.545 > 1.96$ and a P-value of $0.000 < 0.05$; thus, H7 is supported.

DISCUSSIONS

The results of this study empirically confirm that the live shopping feature and content marketing strategies play a significant role in influencing consumer purchasing decisions on the TikTok Shop platform, with online customer reviews (OCR) serving as a key mediating variable that strengthens this relationship.

First, this study found that the presence of the live shopping feature has a significant direct impact on consumer purchase decisions (H1 accepted). These findings are in line with the studies conducted by Addison & Aprilianty (2022) and Hossain et al. (2023), which emphasize that real-time interaction during live shopping sessions can enhance consumer emotional engagement while providing a more interactive and credible shopping experience. Through the live shopping format, consumers have the opportunity to observe products directly, watch real-time product demonstrations, and actively interact with sellers, which cumulatively increases their confidence in making purchasing decisions. This condition is further strengthened on platforms like TikTok Shop, which integrate entertainment elements with live commerce, thereby creating a more engaging and persuasive shopping experience (Zhang, 2024).

Furthermore, this study also reveals that live shopping has a significant impact on shaping positive consumer perceptions towards online customer reviews (H2 accepted). These findings are in line with the argument by Damanik et al. (2024), which states that active consumer engagement in live shopping sessions not only increases purchase interest but also contributes to the credibility of the reviews displayed during the session. Real-time interaction gives consumers the perception that the reviews presented in that context are more authentic, difficult to manipulate, and have higher relevance, thereby increasing the level of trust in the product information obtained.

Furthermore, this study confirms that content marketing has a significant influence on consumer purchasing decisions (H3 accepted). These findings reinforce previous research by Geng et al. (2020) and Mubarrak et al. (2023), which demonstrates that content-based marketing strategies, particularly those packaged in the form of narratives, engaging visualizations, or storytelling techniques, are effectively able to modify consumer perceptions, build trust, and ultimately enhance purchasing decisions. In the context of TikTok Shop, the combination of content creativity and entertainment elements becomes the main factor that attracts attention and drives consumer purchase intentions and realizations (Zhang, 2024).

Additionally, this study also shows that content marketing positively contributes to consumer perception of online customer reviews (H4 accepted). These findings are consistent with studies conducted by Terho et al. (2022) and Fernandes et al. (2022), which show that well-targeted marketing content can positively influence consumer perceptions and encourage them to provide more honest, informative, and constructive reviews. Thus, content marketing not only serves as a product promotion tool but also contributes to building a credible and trustworthy online review ecosystem, which ultimately strengthens consumer trust in both the product and the seller.

This research also provides empirical evidence that online customer reviews have a significant impact on consumer purchasing decisions (H5 accepted). These results are in line with the findings of Elwalda et al. (2016) and Guo et al. (2020), which state that online reviews are one of the main references influencing the purchase decision-making process, especially in platform ecosystems like TikTok Shop that integrate reviews into interactive content formats. The aspects of authenticity, relevance, and credibility of reviews become the main determinants in increasing consumer trust towards the offered products as well as towards the sellers.

Another crucial finding is the mediating role played by online customer reviews in strengthening the relationship between live shopping features (H6 accepted) and content marketing (H7 accepted) on purchase decisions. Specifically, these results indicate that the presence of consumer reviews acts as an intermediary mechanism that enhances the effectiveness of live shopping and content marketing in driving purchase decisions. These findings support the results of studies by Xiao et al. (2022) and Peralta et al. (2025), which emphasize that consumer reviews appearing in real-time during live shopping sessions or as a result of content marketing exposure play a crucial role in building consumer trust, reducing uncertainty, and reinforcing confidence in the purchasing decision-making process.

Overall, the results of this study underscore the importance of integrating live shopping features, content marketing, and online customer reviews in creating a more credible, convincing, and effective shopping experience that influences consumer purchasing decisions on TikTok Shop.

This research also makes a theoretical contribution by filling the gap in previous literature, where most earlier studies (Geng et al., 2020; Kamal et al., 2023) tended to examine each variable separately without considering the synergistic and dynamic interactions among the three variables within a comprehensive conceptual model.

CONCLUSION

This research analyzes 7 hypotheses related to the influence of live shopping features and content marketing on purchasing decisions through online customer reviews. The analysis in this study was conducted quantitatively using the structural equation model method. The results of this study empirically prove that live shopping features and content marketing have a significant impact on consumer purchasing decisions on the TikTok Shop platform, with online customer reviews acting as a mediating variable that strengthens this relationship. These findings also address the gap in previous research that tended to separate the analysis of these three variables. Unlike previous studies that only focused on conventional e-commerce platforms such as Shopee or Tokopedia (Geng et al., 2020; Kamal et al., 2023), this research specifically examines the TikTok Shop ecosystem, which integrates entertainment content, live shopping, and social commerce into a single digital consumer experience.

Theoretically, this research contributes by confirming that online customer reviews are not merely independent variables but play a strategic role as mediators bridging the influence of live shopping features and content marketing on purchasing decisions. This is increasingly relevant considering that the phenomenon of review manipulation prevalent on TikTok Shop can be minimized through the integration of interactive live shopping and credible content marketing. Thus, this research emphasizes the importance of building trust and improving the quality of consumer reviews to strengthen the effectiveness of digital marketing strategies, especially on video-based platforms like TikTok Shop.

The managerial implications for TikTok Shop as a platform indicate that management needs to enhance the integration between live shopping features, content marketing, and online customer review systems into a more controlled and credible ecosystem. TikTok Shop can develop a review verification system based on real-time interactions during live shopping, making the reviews more authentic and difficult to manipulate. Additionally, TikTok Shop needs to encourage innovation in marketing content formats to remain relevant to audience preferences without neglecting aspects of trust and authenticity. Strengthening the monitoring system and detecting review manipulation is also a strategic step to maintain the platform's integrity, considering that online customer reviews have proven to play an important role in driving purchasing decisions.

However, this study has several limitations that can serve as recommendations for future research. First, this study only focuses on TikTok Shop users in the West Java region, specifically Cirebon Regency, so the generalization of the research results is still limited to a specific geographical context. Therefore, subsequent researchers are advised to expand the scope of the study to a national scale or across platforms in order to obtain a more comprehensive picture of consumer behavior in various e-commerce ecosystems. Second, this research has not included other variables such as brand trust, influencer credibility, or consumer psychological factors that could also potentially influence purchasing decisions. Future researchers can develop a conceptual model by adding these variables to produce a more holistic analysis. Additionally, a comparative study between TikTok Shop and other e-commerce platforms such as Shopee Live or Tokopedia Play can be conducted to determine whether the influence patterns among the variables found in this study are consistently applicable across various social commerce platforms.

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