

Exploring the Decision-Making Processes: How Urban Indonesia's Middle-Class Prioritizes Convenience and Cost on Live-Streaming Commerce

Mohammad Fawaid Pradika ^{a,1*}, Talitha Aristawati ^{b,2}, Radifa Husna Sabila ^{c,3}, Satria Aji Pambudi ^{d,4}, Maria Audrey Marjorie ^{e,5}

^{a,b,c,d,e} Universitas Airlangga, Jl. Dharmawangsa Dalam, Surabaya, 60286, Indonesia

¹ mohammad.fawaid.pradika-2023@fisip.unair.ac.id; ² talitha.aristawati-2023@fisip.unair.ac.id; ³ radifa.husna.sabila-2023@fisip.unair.ac.id; ⁴ satria.aji.pambudi-2023@fisip.unair.ac.id; ⁵ maria.audrey.marjorie-2023@fisip.unair.ac.id

*Corresponding author



ARTICLE INFO

Article history

Received: September 03, 2025

Revised: October 03, 2025

Accepted: April 18, 2025

Keywords

Live commerce

Consumer decision-making

Middle-class consumer

Urban society

Consumer behavior

ABSTRACT

This study explores the decision-making process of middle-class consumers in Surabaya, Indonesia, when purchasing primary needs through Shopee Live, an emerging live-streaming commerce feature. Drawing on Kotler and Armstrong's five-stage model of consumer decision-making, this qualitative research explores how internal motivations, external constraints, and digital platform features shape online shopping behavior. In-depth interviews with purposively selected informants were conducted and analyzed using thematic analysis. The findings reveal that the problem recognition stage is influenced by internal factors such as discomfort with offline shopping and limited time, as well as external barriers like store distance and additional offline costs. During the information search stage, consumers rely on Shopee Live hosts, real-time viewer comments, and product reviews. At the alternative evaluation stage, decision-making is shaped by price comparisons, discount availability, user interface ease, and product variety. The purchase decision is ultimately driven by price competitiveness, transactional convenience, and the interactive nature of the live-streaming format. In the post-purchase stage, behavior ranges from product returns and negative reviews among dissatisfied consumers to enthusiastic recommendations among highly satisfied buyers. The study contributes to consumer behavior theory by demonstrating how live commerce integrates digital interactivity with traditional evaluative mechanisms. Practically, it offers strategic insights for digital marketers seeking to engage middle-class urban consumers through affordability, user experience, and trust-building features.



DOI: 10.12928/channel.v13i1.1023

This is an open-access article under the CC-BY-SA license



INTRODUCTION

The fulfillment of primary needs—such as food, clothing, and shelter—has long been central to household survival and social well-being (Al-Farisy, 2023). Historically, these necessities were accessed through barter systems and direct exchanges. However, with the rise of industrialization and global capitalism, consumption practices have undergone a significant transformation, culminating in shopping becoming a dominant mechanism for meeting everyday needs. In recent decades, the proliferation of digital technologies and internet connectivity has further altered consumer behavior, shifting purchasing preferences from traditional brick-and-mortar establishments to online platforms (Bathni et al., 2022). E-commerce is increasingly regarded as a more efficient and accessible alternative, particularly among younger demographics who exhibit high levels of digital literacy and mobile engagement (Utamanyu & Darmastuti, 2022). The ubiquity of smartphones has facilitated constant access to digital marketplaces, fueling the continued expansion of the online retail sector (Amali, 2019). According to the 2023 Indonesia E-Commerce Consumer Behavior Report by Kredivo



and Katadata Insight Center, 79.1% of consumers now adopt a hybrid shopping model, with 58.1% reporting increased frequency of online purchases (Prodjo, 2023). This digital shift was notably accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic, which not only disrupted conventional retail patterns but also compelled brands to intensify their digital marketing strategies to maintain visibility and consumer engagement across online platforms (Simabur et al., 2023).

Platform selection plays a pivotal role in shaping consumer behavior within the digital marketplace. In navigating online retail environments, consumers assess platforms based on critical attributes such as perceived trustworthiness, product quality, usability, and price competitiveness—factors that collectively influence purchase decisions and platform loyalty (Ahlamiyah et al., 2022). These evaluative criteria not only determine where consumers choose to shop but also impact the frequency and confidence with which they engage in online transactions. Among the array of e-commerce platforms operating in Indonesia, Shopee has established itself as a dominant market player. Its success can be attributed to a strategic combination of intuitive interface design, aggressive promotional strategies, and responsive customer service—elements that resonate across diverse demographic segments. According to a national survey conducted by the Ministry of Communication and Information in collaboration with Katadata, 74.7% of respondents reported having installed the Shopee application and using it regularly for online shopping activities (Annur, 2022).

The choice of an online shopping platform plays a critical role in influencing consumer behavior within the digital marketplace. Consumers assess platforms based on multiple key indicators, including trustworthiness, product quality, user convenience, and price competitiveness (Ahlamiyah et al., 2022). These factors significantly affect not only where consumers choose to shop, but also the frequency and confidence with which they interact with a given platform. In the Indonesian e-commerce landscape, Shopee has emerged as one of the most dominant and widely used platforms. Its popularity can be attributed to a user-friendly interface, frequent promotional offers, and responsive customer service, which together enhance its appeal across various consumer segments. A survey conducted by the Ministry of Communication and Information in collaboration with Katadata revealed that 74.7% of respondents had installed the Shopee application on their smartphones and reported regularly using it for online purchases (Annur, 2022).

Evaluating e-commerce live streaming services necessitates a dual focus on both aesthetic and social dimensions, as these elements play a pivotal role in shaping consumer trust and engagement throughout the purchasing process (Ye et al., 2023). The integration of visual appeal and interpersonal communication is fundamental to fostering interactive and emotionally resonant brand-consumer relationships in live streaming environments. Central to this dynamic is the live host, who serves as the primary intermediary between the brand and its audience. A distinctive and engaging communication style by the host can significantly enhance the perceived value of the product and stimulate consumer participation (Chen et al., 2023). When technical delivery is effectively combined with human connection, live commerce platforms can deepen consumer-brand bonds and increase purchasing intensity (Wu & Huang, 2023). As such, marketing communication strategies should be closely aligned with consumer behavior across different stages of the decision-making process. Concurrently, a nuanced understanding of the target audience is essential, as it provides critical insights into consumer preferences and enables the development of live streaming content that resonates more effectively with intended market segments.

In the contemporary consumer landscape, the middle class increasingly prioritizes convenience and affordability in their purchasing behavior (Mundel et al., 2021). Products that are easily accessible and perceived as offering good value for money tend to attract the greatest attention among this demographic. Brand reputation also plays a critical role in shaping purchasing decisions, even within digital marketplaces such as Shopee. Interactive features like Shopee Live contribute to the enhanced appeal of online shopping by allowing consumers to view products in real time, engage directly with sellers, and receive immediate feedback to their inquiries (Rahman et al., 2024). While convenience and competitive pricing remain important, trust and platform security are equally valued, especially among middle-class consumers who often exhibit cautious optimism toward online transactions. Engaging this group through live streaming platforms presents unique challenges, as their decision-making process tends to be deliberate and highly influenced by perceptions of brand credibility, product quality, and the host's communication style during the live broadcast.

Consumers are generally drawn to products that are easily accessible and reasonably priced. Among middle-class consumers in particular, brand reputation remains a significant determinant of purchasing behavior, even within digital marketplaces such as Shopee (Ratnasari & Suradika, 2020; Sinaga & Pramanda, 2018). Interactive features like Shopee Live have further enriched the online shopping experience by enabling real-time product demonstrations, direct engagement with sellers, and immediate feedback to consumer inquiries (Rahman et al., 2024). While such features foster consumer engagement, middle-class purchasing behavior is often shaped by more complex decision-making processes—ones that are influenced not only by perceived value and convenience but also by trust and brand perception. As a result, their interactions with brands through live streaming platforms tend to be more nuanced, requiring a careful balance between persuasive content and credible communication.

The purchase decision represents a central focus within consumer behavior research, which seeks to understand how individuals search for, evaluate, acquire, and utilize products or services that they perceive to fulfill their needs (Anggraeni & Amali, 2023; Schiffman & Wisenblit, 2019). This study adopts the five-stage model of the consumer

decision-making process as outlined by Kotler and Armstrong (2018), comprising: (1) need recognition, where consumers identify a problem or unmet need; (2) information search, where they actively seek relevant solutions; (3) evaluation of alternatives, involving comparisons among available options; (4) the purchase decision, where a final choice is made; and (5) post-purchase behavior, which reflects levels of satisfaction and potential repeat engagement. In the context of digital media—particularly live streaming commerce—these stages are further shaped by platform-specific dynamics. The immersive and interactive features of live commerce introduce a more fluid and responsive environment, where consumer decisions are influenced not only by traditional rational evaluations but also by real-time communication, perceived authenticity, and emotional resonance with the presenter or brand.

This study specifically investigates how middle-class consumers in Surabaya navigate the stages of the purchase decision-making process when fulfilling primary needs—such as food, clothing, and shelter—through Shopee Live. While previous research has explored the broader influence of live streaming on online consumer behavior (Wang et al., 2022), there remains a notable gap in understanding how this interactive format shapes the detailed progression of decision-making within the context of live commerce. To address this gap, the present study adopts a qualitative descriptive approach to examine the experiences, motivations, and evaluative considerations that influence the online shopping behavior of Surabaya's middle-class consumers. By focusing on Shopee Live as the primary platform, the research aims to provide nuanced insights into how live streaming features impact the consumer online shopping behavior.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative descriptive approach to investigate the decision-making processes of middle-class consumers in Surabaya when purchasing primary needs through Shopee Live, the live streaming feature of the Shopee platform. A qualitative methodology was selected for its capacity to capture and interpret the lived experiences, perspectives, and behavioral dynamics of participants in depth (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018). This approach enables a nuanced exploration of how consumers interact with live shopping features and make purchasing decisions within a digital ecosystem shaped by both technological affordances and interpersonal communication. By focusing on this hybrid environment, the study aims to reveal how technological design and human interaction collectively influence consumer engagement and decision-making in the context of live commerce.

The research focuses on female consumers in Surabaya, aged 18 to 34 years, who have recently utilized Shopee Live to purchase essential items. Participants were selected using purposive sampling based on predefined criteria aligned with the study's objectives. The inclusion criteria were as follows: (1) residency in Surabaya; (2) identification as female, reflecting the greater involvement of women in evaluating shopping options and managing household consumption; (3) recent experience purchasing essential goods via Shopee Live within the past month; and (4) classification within the middle-income bracket, with monthly expenditures ranging from IDR 1,200,000 to IDR 6,000,000, in accordance with the World Bank's income classification (Kusnandar, 2022). This sampling strategy ensured the selection of informants with both relevant and current experiences in relation to the consumer behavior being examined.

The study employed in-depth interviews as the primary method of data collection. This qualitative technique enables the elicitation of rich, detailed narratives, offering valuable insights into participants' emotional and cognitive responses throughout the shopping process (Mack et al., 2005). The interview guide was structured around the five stages of the purchase decision-making process proposed by Kotler and Armstrong (2018): (1) problem or need recognition, (2) information search, (3) evaluation of alternatives, (4) purchase decision, and (5) post-purchase behavior. Interviews were conducted either face-to-face or via video conferencing platforms, depending on each participant's preference and availability. Each session lasted approximately 45 to 60 minutes, allowing sufficient time to explore participants' experiences in depth.

The interview data were analyzed using thematic analysis, a qualitative method that involves systematically coding transcripts, identifying recurrent patterns, and organizing these patterns into overarching themes. This approach enabled a comprehensive understanding of how middle-class consumers in Surabaya navigate and interpret their online shopping experiences via Shopee Live. Particular attention was given to identifying recurring behaviors, preferences, and emotional drivers that influenced each stage of the decision-making process. To ensure the validity and reliability of the data, source triangulation was employed by comparing responses across multiple informants to identify consistent patterns. Additionally, member checking was conducted by sharing interview summaries with participants, allowing them to confirm the accuracy and authenticity of their reported experiences. To further enhance analytical rigor and reduce potential researcher bias, peer debriefing was carried out, wherein interpretations were critically reviewed and discussed with fellow researchers.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The middle class in Surabaya, as part of an increasingly urbanized society, actively adopts technology to facilitate and improve daily activities, including transactions related to fulfilling primary needs (Mayowan, 2016). The rise of

e-commerce has expanded their access to a broader range of options in terms of price, product quality, and variety, offering distinct advantages over more limited marketplaces found in rural communities. Consequently, urban consumers tend to engage in more deliberate and reflective purchasing behavior (Ridho et al., 2021). The COVID-19 pandemic further accelerated this shift, with online shopping gaining prominence due to its convenience and the abundance of promotional incentives offered by e-commerce platforms. As noted by Wijaya et al. (2023), individuals now typically utilize an average of two e-commerce platforms to meet their shopping needs. These developments have contributed to a transformation in the purchasing decision-making process of Surabaya's middle-class consumers, particularly in the context of using Shopee Live to acquire essential goods. Following Kotler and Armstrong's (2018) five-stage model of the purchase decision process—comprising problem recognition, information search, evaluation of alternatives, purchase decision, and post-purchase behavior—this study presents findings that examine how each stage is experienced and navigated by Surabaya's urban middle-class consumers through the Shopee Live platform.

A. Middle-Class Recognize the Problem Needs

The purchase decision process begins with the stage of need recognition, wherein consumers become aware of a problem or unmet need. This awareness may be triggered by both internal and external factors. Internal factors refer to personal conditions—such as physiological needs, emotional states, or lifestyle preferences—that influence consumption motives. In contrast, external stimuli may include advertising, product recommendations, or social interactions that prompt consumers to consider specific products or solutions (Kotler & Armstrong, 2018). Findings from in-depth interviews with several informants highlight diverse reasons behind the preference of Surabaya's middle-class consumers for online shopping via Shopee Live over conventional offline methods. This preference is shaped by the interplay of internal and external influences, which collectively inform the initial stage of the purchase decision-making process: the recognition of a problem or need.

One prominent internal factor influencing the preference for online shopping is the discomfort experienced during face-to-face interactions with offline shopkeepers. Several informants reported feelings of awkwardness or hesitation when asking questions in physical stores, often attributed to unfriendly or unaccommodating service encounters. This social discomfort can inhibit open communication and limit consumers' ability to explore product details in a relaxed manner. Shopee Live addresses this concern by offering a more comfortable, anonymous, and accessible environment, allowing consumers to observe product demonstrations and ask questions without the pressure of direct interpersonal engagement. Another significant internal factor is time constraint. Informants from Surabaya's working middle class frequently cited demanding work schedules, long hours, and overtime responsibilities as barriers to offline shopping. Even weekends are often reserved for rest rather than routine errands. In this context, time efficiency emerges as a key consideration, with Shopee Live providing a practical alternative that enables consumers to shop conveniently from home, at times that align with their personal routines.

In addition to internal factors, external influences also play a significant role in shaping the preference for online shopping through Shopee Live among Surabaya's middle-class consumers. A commonly reported challenge is the inefficiency associated with the distance between home and physical retail locations. Informants described the time and energy required for travel as a major deterrent, particularly in the context of their fast-paced urban lifestyles. This logistical burden renders offline shopping less practical and less appealing. In contrast, Shopee Live is perceived as a more efficient and accessible alternative, offering the ability to browse and purchase products without the need for physical movement. The platform provides convenient access to a wide array of goods, allowing consumers to overcome geographical barriers while streamlining the fulfillment of daily needs.

Another key external factor influencing the decision to shop via Shopee Live is the perceived cost and time efficiency. Offline shopping often involves additional expenditures, including transportation costs, dining out, and the opportunity costs associated with travel time. For members of the working middle class, these cumulative costs present a barrier to traditional retail shopping. Shopee Live addresses this challenge by enabling consumers to shop from the comfort of their homes, with products delivered directly to their doorsteps. This convenience is widely regarded as both energy-saving and cost-effective. Moreover, Shopee Live frequently features promotional deals and discounted prices, which are particularly attractive to budget-conscious middle-class consumers. Informants emphasized that while brand reputation is not always their primary concern, they place considerable value on product quality, aesthetic appeal, and suitability to personal preferences. As a result, Shopee Live is seen not only as a financially accessible alternative but also as a platform that offers diverse and appealing product options that align with their lifestyle needs.

In the purchase decision-making process, both internal and external factors are instrumental in triggering consumer needs or problems that initiate the search for solutions (Elli et al., 2023). Internal factors typically encompass personal and emotional needs, while external factors relate to environmental influences such as advertising, social interactions, and logistical constraints. This study reveals how Shopee Live addresses challenges associated with both categories of triggers. On the internal side, emotional discomfort with in-store interactions and time limitations due to demanding schedules act as primary motivators for seeking more convenient shopping alternatives. Externally, the inefficiency of

traveling long distances, additional expenses such as transportation, and limited product selection in physical stores serve as deterrents to offline shopping. Shopee Live emerges as a strategic response to these intersecting constraints—offering consumers a platform that mitigates emotional and situational burdens while also overcoming practical external barriers.

Moreover, Shopee Live functions not merely as a commercial platform but as a mediated space that actively shapes consumer behavior through real-time interaction and performative selling. As media systems construct social reality, they influence how individuals perceive, evaluate, and act within digital environments. Shopee Live exemplifies this dynamic by merging entertainment, information, and commerce—an embodiment of media convergence as theorized by Jenkins (2006). The platform creates an immersive shopping experience that integrates visual aesthetics, seller intimacy, and interactive engagement, reinforcing both internal motivations and external influences on consumer behavior. As such, Shopee Live operates simultaneously as a transactional marketplace and a media-driven environment, transforming consumer decision-making processes in the digital era.

B. Middle-Class Information-Seeking Behavior

Following the recognition of a problem or need, consumers enter the information search stage of the purchase decision process. This stage involves two levels of involvement: heightened attention and active information seeking (Tarsidi, 2022). During the heightened attention phase, consumers passively absorb product-related information without intentional effort. In contrast, the active search phase is characterized by deliberate efforts to obtain detailed information through various channels, such as reading product descriptions, consulting peers, or using digital platforms. Interviews with middle-class informants in Surabaya revealed that all participants had reached the active information search stage, with Shopee Live serving as their primary source of product information. Informants expressed a clear preference for live hosts on the platform, citing the value of real-time interaction and immediate explanations that enhance product understanding and decision-making confidence.

During the active information-seeking phase, the credibility and accessibility of information sources play a critical role in shaping consumer decision-making. Kotler and Keller (2015) categorize information sources into four primary types: (1) personal sources, such as friends, family, neighbors, and acquaintances, which offer trust-based recommendations; (2) commercial sources, including advertising, websites, product displays, and salespeople—represented in the context of Shopee Live by live hosts who function as real-time sales representatives providing product demonstrations and consultations; (3) public sources, encompassing mass media, online reviews, and social media platforms, where on Shopee Live, these are reflected in viewer comments and real-time feedback from previous buyers; and (4) experiential sources, which refer to prior consumer experiences, typically communicated through user-generated reviews and star ratings. Among Surabaya's middle-class consumers, the convergence of commercial, public, and experiential sources on Shopee Live significantly enhances their sense of confidence and informed judgment prior to making purchase decisions.

The middle-class community in Surabaya City values the consistency of Shopee Live hosts in delivering detailed product explanations, even when viewer numbers are relatively low. This practice reflects a strong commitment to providing high-quality informational services, regardless of audience size. Real-time visual demonstrations conducted during live sessions enable consumers to gain a clearer understanding of the products being offered. For items such as bags and clothing, hosts frequently describe key product attributes—including size, material, and fit—while visually showcasing how the items appear when worn or used. This form of live, visual communication plays a crucial role in reducing uncertainty and enhancing consumer confidence, particularly in situations where physical interaction with the product is not possible.

Direct interaction between consumers and live hosts plays a critical role in the information search stage of the purchase decision process. Interview findings indicate that viewers frequently engage with hosts during live sessions by posing questions—particularly regarding product sizing and suitability—which are often addressed through personalized recommendations. This interactive format is further enhanced by viewer comments and peer recommendations, as many previous buyers actively share their product experiences in real time. Such contributions provide diverse perspectives and serve to validate product credibility. Additionally, star ratings and written reviews from past buyers offer further reassurance, assisting consumers in making more confident purchasing decisions. However, several informants noted limitations in the depth of information provided during live streams for specific product categories, such as personal care items like soap. In these cases, hosts often emphasize promotional pricing over detailed explanations of product composition or ingredients. As a result, consumers are compelled to consult user reviews and product descriptions outside the live session to assess suitability and quality more thoroughly.

During the active information search stage, middle-class consumers in Surabaya rely on three primary sources to inform their purchase decisions. First, commercial sources—particularly Shopee Live hosts—serve as real-time sales representatives, offering consultations on product specifications such as size, color, and functionality. Second, public sources include viewer comments and live chat interactions, which often feature real-time feedback from previous buyers and contribute to collective evaluations of the product. Third, experiential sources, such as star ratings and written reviews from past customers, provide retrospective validation of product performance and quality. By integrating insights from

these three types of sources, consumers are able to form a more comprehensive understanding of available options and make purchase decisions that align with their specific needs and preferences.

C. Middle-class Alternative Evaluation and Price Comparison

At the alternative evaluation stage of the purchase decision process, consumers critically assess various product options and shopping platforms before finalizing their choice. In the context of Shopee Live, several features contribute to its appeal, including real-time promotional offers, discount vouchers, free shipping, and a highly interactive shopping experience. The increasing sophistication of marketplace functionalities—driven by technological innovation—has transformed live shopping into both an entertaining activity and a strategic avenue for securing the best deals (Iryani & Fauzan, 2023). For the middle-class community in Surabaya City, the evaluation of alternatives is guided by a range of considerations, such as product affordability, platform usability, the availability of free shipping and additional discounts, and the breadth of product options accessible through the live streaming feature.

Among the various factors considered during the alternative evaluation stage, price emerges as the most decisive. Informants from Surabaya consistently reported comparing prices across different platforms, particularly between Shopee Live and TikTok Shop. Shopee Live was generally perceived as offering more affordable prices, reinforcing its position as the preferred platform. Even when evaluating comparable live streaming features, consumers continued to regard Shopee Live as delivering greater value for money. This pattern reflects the behavior identified by Ridho et al. (2021), in which middle-class consumers engage in deliberate comparisons before making a purchase—a practice popularly characterized in Indonesian discourse as *“kaum mendang-mending”*, referring to a culture of weighing options and negotiating value. Such behavior underscores the pragmatic mindset of Surabaya’s urban middle class, who conduct careful price evaluations and seek platforms offering optimal affordability and promotional incentives. These findings reaffirm that price sensitivity and promotional appeal are central to the alternative evaluation and purchase decision stages in digital commerce.

Beyond product pricing, the availability of discount vouchers and free shipping plays a critical role in the alternative evaluation stage for middle-class consumers in Surabaya. Shopping vouchers significantly enhance consumer interest in Shopee Live, as they effectively lower the final purchase cost, making the platform more financially attractive than its competitors. Vouchers function as a strategic promotional tool, particularly when they are tied to minimum purchase thresholds (Aini, 2024). Informants reported that they frequently compare prices across platforms, such as Shopee Live and TikTok Shop. In instances where the initial listed prices are comparable, the presence of a discount voucher on Shopee Live can reduce the final transaction amount substantially, ultimately influencing purchase decisions.

Free shipping promotions also play a significant role in consumer evaluations during the alternative assessment stage. Middle-class consumers in Surabaya noted that while platforms like TikTok Shop typically offer free shipping only for multi-item purchases, Shopee provides free shipping even for single-product transactions. This feature enhances Shopee’s appeal by minimizing or eliminating shipping costs—an important advantage for price-sensitive consumers (Rahayu, 2022). Informants reported regularly comparing Shopee Live with TikTok Shop and offline retail alternatives. Across these comparisons, Shopee Live consistently emerged as the more economical choice, primarily due to its combination of competitive pricing, discount vouchers, and accessible free shipping. These cumulative benefits position Shopee Live as the preferred platform for cost-conscious members of the urban middle class.

The ease of application use and the breadth of product offerings are also critical factors in the alternative evaluation process for the middle-class community in Surabaya City. While various e-commerce platforms serve as online shopping alternatives, Shopee is perceived to offer a more comprehensive and diverse range of products. Additionally, many consumers expressed dissatisfaction with the user interface and layout of competing platforms, describing them as less intuitive and more difficult to navigate. As a result, Shopee is seen as a more user-friendly and preferred option. For example, when comparing Shopee with Tokopedia, several informants indicated that Shopee’s interface is easier to understand and that it provides a wider selection of products. These elements contribute to a heightened sense of convenience, which plays a pivotal role in shaping consumer platform preference during the evaluation of alternatives.

Overall, during the alternative evaluation stage, middle-class consumers in Surabaya City emphasize four key considerations: (1) competitive pricing in comparison with other platforms, (2) the availability of discount vouchers and free shipping, (3) the ease of navigating the application interface, and (4) the diversity of product offerings. Shopee Live effectively delivers value across all of these dimensions, positioning itself as a more economical and advantageous platform. Its user-friendly interface and extensive product selection contribute to a seamless and satisfying shopping experience, further reinforcing Shopee’s status as the preferred e-commerce platform among Surabaya’s middle-class consumers.

D. Middle-Class Purchase Preferences

Following the evaluation of alternatives, consumers enter the purchase decision stage, where they determine whether to proceed with a transaction based on their identified needs and preferences. According to Kotler and Armstrong

(2018), this decision is influenced by two primary factors: (1) the opinions of others and (2) unexpected situational factors, such as shifts in economic conditions, competitive pricing, or negative feedback from peers. For middle-class consumers in Surabaya City, the ease and convenience of conducting transactions via Shopee Live plays a significant role in shaping their final purchase decisions. Notably, the availability of exclusive vouchers and larger discounts during live streaming sessions—compared to regular purchases—makes Shopee Live a more attractive option. These incentives enable consumers to access lower prices than those offered on competing platforms or in offline retail stores, highlighting the importance of price competitiveness in final purchase choices. As emphasized by Amali and Pudrianisa (2024), a central step in consumer decision-making is the integration process, wherein previously gathered information is synthesized to evaluate behavioral alternatives and ultimately inform a purchasing choice.

Beyond competitive pricing, additional benefits such as cashback offers, free shipping, and real-time interaction with sellers further influence the purchasing decisions of Surabaya's middle-class consumers. Shopee Live facilitates direct communication between buyers and sellers, allowing consumers to inquire about product specifics—such as sizing, material, and suitability—thereby supporting more informed decision-making. This two-way engagement fosters trust and enhances consumer confidence in the products being offered. The availability of daily necessities and household staples through Shopee Live further increases its appeal, positioning it as more advantageous than competing platforms. Moreover, the platform's intuitive interface and the opportunity to obtain product insights during live sessions are especially valued by middle-class consumers, who tend to be discerning in their purchasing behavior. While some informants noted occasional discrepancies between product expectations and actual items—often due to technical limitations such as lighting during the live stream—these issues were not significant enough to deter continued use of the platform.

According to Kotler and Armstrong (2018), two primary factors influence consumer purchase decisions: the opinions of others and unforeseen circumstances, such as economic downturns, competitive pricing, or negative product reviews. Among Surabaya's middle-class consumers, the ease of conducting transactions via Shopee Live plays a central role in shaping purchase behavior. A key aspect of Shopee Live's appeal is the availability of exclusive vouchers and larger discounts during live sessions, which enable consumers to acquire products at significantly lower prices than those offered on other platforms or through offline retail channels. This price advantage underscores the importance of price competition in influencing the purchasing decisions of the urban middle class. Furthermore, additional incentives such as cashback offers and free shipping amplify the platform's attractiveness, providing substantial savings that further motivate consumer engagement and platform loyalty.

Beyond financial incentives, Shopee Live facilitates two-way communication between sellers and potential buyers, enabling consumers to ask real-time questions and seek personalized recommendations, particularly regarding product size and suitability. This interactive engagement fosters trust and enhances consumer confidence in the purchasing process. Shopee Live's broader selection of essential household products—relative to other platforms—also contributes to its status as the preferred choice among Surabaya's middle-class consumers. The platform provides a seamless and satisfying shopping experience through a user-friendly interface and convenient features. While occasional mismatches in product expectations may occur due to technical limitations, such as lighting during live streams, these issues do not significantly deter consumer participation (Blessa & Indriani, 2022). In summary, key factors influencing purchase decisions include competitive pricing, additional discounts through vouchers, a wide range of essential goods, ease of navigation, and direct interaction with sellers—elements that collectively enhance consumer satisfaction and influence platform preference.

E. Post-Purchase Decisions and Middle-Class Actions

The post-purchase behavior stage represents the final phase in the consumer decision-making process, during which consumers assess whether the product fulfills their expectations. This stage encompasses a range of behavioral and emotional responses influenced by the consumer's level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction (Amali & Putri, 2024; Chaidir & Purnamasari, 2022). Dissatisfaction arises when the product falls short of expectations, satisfaction occurs when expectations are met, and delight is experienced when expectations are exceeded (Asrizal & Syah, 2022; Kotler & Armstrong, 2018). These emotional outcomes are commonly reported by consumers who engage with Shopee Live, a rapidly expanding e-commerce platform. Among middle-class consumers in Surabaya, post-purchase evaluations typically involve reflections on product quality, the reliability of service delivery, and the overall shopping experience.

A key indicator of post-purchase behavior is the utilization of Shopee's "return" feature, particularly when the product received does not meet consumer expectations. Middle-class consumers in Surabaya frequently rely on this mechanism to address dissatisfaction. The return process is governed by specific policies: if the fault lies with the seller, the seller is responsible for covering the return shipping costs; conversely, if the issue is attributed to the buyer, the shipping costs must be borne by the buyer. This policy framework reflects Shopee's commitment to consumer protection and dispute resolution. As such, the return feature constitutes a vital component of the platform's post-purchase services, contributing significantly to consumer confidence, satisfaction, and continued platform loyalty.

Service quality—particularly in the form of after-sales support—plays a critical role in shaping post-purchase behavior. Among Surabaya's middle-class consumers, satisfaction or dissatisfaction is commonly expressed through Shopee's rating and review system. Products that do not align with descriptions or storefront visuals often receive one- or two-star ratings accompanied by negative reviews. In contrast, products that meet or exceed expectations typically garner high ratings and favorable feedback. These user-generated evaluations not only reflect individual experiences but also serve as influential cues for future consumers. Negative reviews can significantly diminish the likelihood of repurchasing from the same seller, whereas positive experiences enhance trust and reinforce platform loyalty. As such, both product quality and responsive after-sales service are essential to sustaining consumer confidence in live-streaming commerce environments.

Beyond product evaluation, Shopee's review feature plays a significant role in post-purchase behavior. Middle-class consumers in Surabaya often share their experiences through reviews that include photos or videos, although not all purchases result in feedback. These reviews frequently address the overall purchasing process, the safety and condition of product delivery, and the accuracy of information provided by hosts during Shopee Live sessions. Notably, Shopee's coin reward system also contributes to the volume of reviews submitted. Users receive 25 coins—equivalent to 25 rupiah—for each review, which can be accumulated and redeemed for discounts on future purchases. This incentive structure encourages consumer participation in the review system, while simultaneously serving as a valuable source of information for prospective buyers engaged in the decision-making process.

Reviews and feedback provided by Surabaya's middle-class consumers also offer valuable insights into their level of post-purchase satisfaction. Consumers who are highly satisfied often assign ratings such as eight out of ten and actively recommend the product to others. However, some informants highlighted the need for continued innovation in Shopee Live features to further enhance the overall shopping experience. Additionally, there is a growing emphasis on the importance of careful seller selection. Consumers increasingly recognize that not all sellers provide reliable service, and this awareness has led to more selective purchasing behaviors aimed at minimizing dissatisfaction.

Ultimately, post-purchase behavior among Surabaya's middle-class consumers is characterized by varying levels of satisfaction, ranging from dissatisfaction to high satisfaction. Consumers who are dissatisfied often utilize Shopee's return feature and leave negative reviews, typically avoiding future transactions with the same seller (Asrizal & Syah, 2022). In contrast, satisfied consumers express their approval through positive reviews, motivated either by platform incentives or a desire to assist other buyers. Those who are highly satisfied frequently recommend the product to close family members, particularly when it involves essential goods. This recommendation behavior indicates a strong sense of trust and fulfillment, suggesting that the product has exceeded expectations. As defined by Adcock et al. (2001), consumer purchasing behavior encompasses not only the act of buying and using a product but also the post-consumption behaviors that follow, including product advocacy. In this regard, recommending products to others serves as an extension of consumer behavior and reflects deeper levels of satisfaction and brand loyalty (Amali & Putri, 2024).

CONCLUSION

This study examines the decision-making process of middle-class consumers in Surabaya when purchasing primary needs through Shopee Live, identifying key stages and influencing factors throughout the consumer journey. During the problem recognition stage, internal factors such as discomfort with offline shopping and time constraints, alongside external factors like store distance and transportation costs, play critical roles in prompting online shopping behavior. In the information search stage, consumers rely heavily on Shopee Live hosts, real-time audience comments, and user-generated product reviews to gather relevant information. The alternative evaluation stage is shaped by considerations such as pricing, the availability of discounts and free shipping, ease of application use, and product variety. Final purchase decisions are influenced by the appeal of price competitiveness, the convenience of transactions, and the interactive nature of live shopping. In the post-purchase stage, behavioral responses vary: dissatisfied consumers often return products and leave negative reviews; satisfied consumers provide positive feedback; and highly satisfied consumers recommend the products to family members, reflecting trust and brand loyalty.

The findings of this study support core principles of consumer behavior theory by demonstrating how internal motivations, external constraints, and interactive digital environments collectively shape purchase decisions on live commerce platforms. Theoretically, the study contributes to the evolving discourse on digital consumption by illustrating how Shopee Live's real-time features influence each stage of the decision-making process, effectively blending elements of traditional and digital shopping behavior. Practically, the research offers strategic insights for brands and business owners targeting middle-class urban consumers. Specifically, it highlights the importance of designing live shopping experiences that prioritize affordability, transaction efficiency, and trust-enhancing mechanisms, such as transparent return policies and reward systems like Shopee Coins. These features are particularly effective in engaging cost-conscious consumers who value convenience and functionality over brand prestige or premium quality.

For future research, it is recommended to examine other demographic segments, such as rural consumers or older age groups, to uncover potential variations in online shopping behavior and platform engagement. Expanding the scope

beyond urban middle-class consumers could provide a more comprehensive understanding of how sociodemographic factors influence decision-making in live commerce contexts. Additionally, comparative studies across multiple live commerce platforms—such as Shopee Live, TikTok Live, and LazLive—would offer valuable insights into platform-specific effectiveness, feature relevance, and consumer preferences. Such research could help identify the distinct affordances and limitations of each platform, thereby informing more targeted and inclusive digital commerce strategies.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The researcher wishes to express sincere gratitude to Universitas Airlangga, particularly the Master's Program in Media and Communication, for the academic support, guidance, and valuable resources that have significantly contributed to the completion of this study. Special thanks are also extended to all informants who generously shared their time and insights. Their contributions are deeply appreciated and have enriched this research with meaningful and contextually grounded perspectives.

REFERENCES

- Adcock, D., Halborg, A., & Ross, C. (2001). *Marketing: Principles and Practice*. London: Pearson Education
- Ahlimiyah, Q., Handayani, R. I., Lia, F., Cahyanti, D., & Mandiri, U. N. (2022). Bianglala Informatika Komparasi Pemilihan Platform Belanja Online dengan Menggunakan Metode Simple Additive (SAW) dan Profile Matching. *Bianglala Informatika*, 10(2), 96–103. <https://doi.org/10.31294/bi.v10i2.13181>
- Aini, S. N. (2024). Peran Minat Beli dalam Memediasi Hubungan Flash Sale dan Voucher Diskon Terhadap Keputusan Pembelian Produk Fashion di Marketplace Shopee. *ISTIKHLAF: Jurnal Ekonomi, Perbankan dan Manajemen Syariah*, 6(2), 55-72. <https://doi.org/10.51311/istikhlaf.v6i2.657>
- Al-Farisy, M. A. F. (2023). *Peran E-Commerce Shopee dalam Pemenuhan Kebutuhan Pokok Masyarakat Desa Tanah Merah Kecamatan Siak Hulu Kabupaten Kampar Perspektif Ekonomi Syariah* [Skripsi]. Universitas Islam Negeri Sultan Syarif Kasim. <http://repository.uin-suska.ac.id/65706/>
- Amali, M. T. (2019). Pengaruh Terpaan Iklan Online Dan Kelompok Referensi Terhadap Perilaku Adopsi Go-Jek Di Kota Semarang Yang Dimediasi Oleh Sikap Konsumen. *Jurnal Audience*, 2(1), 1-19. <https://doi.org/10.33633/ja.v2i1.2692>
- Amali, M. T., & Pudrianisa, S. L. G. (2024). The Impact of Social Media Exposure and Peer Group Towards Gen Z Decision To Visit Pasar Kangen Yogyakarta. *Komunikatif: Jurnal Ilmiah Komunikasi*, 13(2), 153–164. <https://doi.org/10.33508/jk.v13i2.5634>
- Amali, M. T., & Putri, L. C. (2024). McDxNewJeans collaborative campaign: How Co-Branding impacts fandom purchase behavior. *COMMICAST*, 5(3), 51-70. <https://doi.org/10.12928/commicast.v5i3.11719>
- Anggraeni, S., & Amali, M. T. (2023). The influence of NCT dream as somethinc brand ambassador on the fandom purchase decision. Symposium of Literature, Culture, and Communication (SYLECTION) 2023, 3(1), 114. <https://doi.org/10.12928/sylection.v3i1.13948>
- Anggraini, N., Yolandika, C., Utoyo, B., & Irawati, L. (2022). Proses Pengambilan Keputusan Konsumen Dalam Pembelian Produk Lada Di Provinsi Lampung. *Jurnal Agrisep*, 23(1). 43–51. <https://doi.org/10.17969/agrisep.v23i1.26152>
- Anisa, Risnawati, R., & Chamidah, N. (2022). Pengaruh Word Of Mouth Mengenai Live Streaming Tiktok Shop Terhadap Keputusan Pembelian Konsumen. *Jurnal Komunikasi Pemberdayaan*, 1(2). 131-143. <https://doi.org/10.47431/jkp.v1i2.230>
- Annur, C. M. (2022). Aplikasi Layanan Belanja Online yang Digunakan Responden. Katadata. Retrieved from <https://databoks.katadata.co.id/teknologi-telekomunikasi/statistik/bb091ba67c27128/aplikasi-belanja-online-paling-banyak-digunakan-ini-dia-juaranya>
- Asrizal, & Syah, A. S. (2022). Analisis Tahap-Tahap Proses Keputusan Pembelian Laptop (Studi Kasus : Mahasiswa Fakultas Ekonomi). *Menara Ekonomi*, 8(1), 1–7. <https://www.jurnal.umsb.ac.id/index.php/menaraekonomi/article/view/3298>
- Bathni, I., Junaedi, E., Turkamun, T., & Darmawan, D. (2022). Pengaruh Jual Beli Online terhadap Pasar Tradisional Pedagang Pakaian dan Tas di Pasar Ciputat. *Jurnal Sekretari Universitas Pamulang*, 9(1), 59–73. <https://doi.org/10.32493/skr.v9i1.27113>
- Blessa, V. A., & Indriani, F. (2022). Analisis Pengaruh Kepercayaan, Keterlibatan Konsumen, dan Kualitas Produk Serta Dampaknya terhadap Keputusan Pembelian Produk Melalui Shopee Live. *Diponegoro Journal of Management*, 11(1), 1–11. <https://ejournal3.undip.ac.id/index.php/djom/article/view/34010>

- Chaidir, R. A., & Purnamasari, O. (2022). The effect of Indomie advertising on Instagram on purchase decisions (survey on Instagram account @indomie). *COMMICAST*, 3(2 SE-Articles), 116–127. <https://doi.org/10.12928/commicast.v3i2.5946>
- Chen, A., Zhang, Y., Liu, Y., & Lu, Y. (2023). Be a good speaker in livestream shopping: A speech act theory perspective. *Electronic Commerce Research and Applications*, 61. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.elerap.2023.101301>
- Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (2018). *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Research*. London: SAGE Publications.
- Elli, E. E., Bahfiarti, T., & Farid, M. (2023). Dampak Brand Awareness terhadap Keputusan Pembelian Produk Big Bananas di Kota Makassar. *Jurnal Representamen*, 9(02). 76-93. <https://doi.org/10.30996/representamen.v9i02.9558>
- Iryani, N., & Fauzan, T. R. (2023). Pemasaran Digital Melalui Fitur Live Pada Platform Marketplace. *Jurnal Manajemen*, 13(2), 121–139. <https://doi.org/10.30656/jm.v13i2.7693>
- Jenkins, H. (2006). *Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide*. New York: New York University Press
- Kotler, P., & Armstrong, G. (2018). *Principles of Marketing* (17th Edition). London: Pearson Publication.
- Kotler, P., & Keller, K. L. (2015). *Marketing Management* (15th Edition). London: Pearson Publication.
- Kusnandar, V. B. (2022). *Sebanyak 115 Juta Masyarakat Indonesia Menuju Kelas Menengah*. Katadata. Retrieved from <https://databoks.katadata.co.id/layanan-konsumen-kesehatan/statistik/78857e1bb762696/sebanyak-115-juta-masyarakat-indonesia-menuju-kelas-menengah>
- Mack, N., Woodsong, C., MacQueen, K. M., Guest, G., & Namey, E. (2005). *Qualitative Research Methods: A Data Collector's Field Guide*. North Carolina: Family Health International.
- Mayowan, Y. (2016). Penerapan Teknologi Informasi dan Komunikasi di Desa (Studi Kasus di Kabupaten Lamongan). *Profit: Jurnal Administrasi Bisnis*, 10(1), 14–23. <https://doi.org/10.21776/ub.profit.2016.010.01.2>
- Monica, P. D., & Darma, G. S. (2022). Digital Marketing Strategy For Balinese Handcrafts In The Metaverse Era. *CHANNEL: Jurnal Komunikasi*, 10(1). <https://doi.org/10.12928/channel.v10i1.23747>
- Mundel, J., Soopramanien, D., & Huddleston, P. (2021). Affordable luxuries: Comparing American and Chinese millennial consumers. *Asia Pacific Management Review*, 26(4), 215–225. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.apmr.2021.02.003>
- Prodjo, W. A. (2023). *Tips dan Strategi Penting untuk Dagang di Masa Endemi*. Kompas.com. Retrieved from <https://umkm.kompas.com/read/2023/07/16/110000083/tips-dan-strategi-penting-untuk-dagang-di-masa-endemi?page=all>
- Rahayu, D. W. S. (2022). Perilaku Konsumen dalam Penggunaan Voucher Shopee. *Akuntabilitas: Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Ekonomi*, 15(2), 52–59. <https://doi.org/10.35457/akuntabilitas.v14i2.2541>
- Rahman, S. A., Rusmianti, Nurmiati, Pane, S., Fatmasari, & Hartinah, S. (2024). Marketing Strategies to Increase Business Revenue using Shopee Live Streaming Features. *International Journal of Community Care of Humanity (IJCCH)*, 2(5), 631–645. <https://journal.lsmsharing.com/ijcch>
- Ramadhayanti, A. (2023). Penggunaan Fitur Live Streaming sebagai Marketing Communication dan Leadcustomer Terhadap Peningkatan Penjualan. *Manajemen Dewantara*, 7(1), 117–128. <https://doi.org/10.30738/md.v7i1.14333>
- Ratnasari, L., & Suradika, A. (2020). Membangun Reputasi Sekolah Islam di Kalangan Kelas Menengah Muslim. *Perspektif Komunikasi: Jurnal Ilmu Komunikasi Politik dan Komunikasi Bisnis*, 4(1), 18-29. <https://doi.org/10.24853/pk.4.1.18-29>
- Ridho, M. A., Lestariningsih, D. S., & Hardi, O. S. (2021). Keputusan Pembelian Berbelanja di E-Commerce pada Masyarakat Kelas Bawah di Jakarta. *Journal of Social Education*, 2(1), 1–4. <https://doi.org/10.23960/JIPS/v2i1.1-4>
- Sari, H. P., & Pratama, A. M. (2023). *Cerita Belanja di Live Shopping: Harga Barang Lebih Murah hingga Gratis Ongkir*. Retrieved from <https://money.kompas.com/read/2023/08/01/154000526/cerita-belanja-di-live-shopping--harga-barang-lebih-murah-hingga-gratis-ongkir>
- Schiffman, L. G., & Wisenblit, J. (2019). *Consumer Behavior: Global Edition*. New Jersey: Pearson Education.
- Simabur, L. A., Herlina, R., & Wiradharma, G. (2023). Creating Exciting Content: A Descriptive Study of Pixbox's Digital Marketing Strategies on Social Media. *CHANNEL: Jurnal Komunikasi*, 11(1). <https://doi.org/10.12928/channel.v11i1.123>
- Sinaga, L. R., & Pramanda, N. I. (2018). Analisis pengaruh brand name, service quality, dan promotion terhadap keputusan pembelian konsumen pada Miniso Tunjungan Plaza Surabaya. *Jurnal Manajemen Teori Dan Terapan*, 11(1), 51-70. <https://doi.org/10.20473/jmtt.v11i1.8530>
- Tarsidi, T. (2022). *Pengaruh Online Customer Review, Online Customer Rating, dan Viral Marketing terhadap Keputusan Pembelian Produk Kesehatan dan Kecantikan Melalui Shopee* [Skripsi]. Sekolah Tinggi Ilmu Ekonomi Indonesia. <http://repository.stei.ac.id/7805/>

- Utamanyu, R. A., & Darmastuti, R. (2022). Budaya Belanja Online Generasi Z dan Generasi Milenial di Jawa Tengah (Studi Kasus Produk Kecantikan di Online Shop Beauty by ASAME). *Scriptura*, 12(1), 58–71. <https://doi.org/10.9744/scriptura.12.1.58-71>
- Wang, Y., Lu, Z., Cao, P., Chu, J., Wang, H., & Wattenhofer, R. (2022). How Live Streaming Changes Shopping Decisions in E-commerce: A Study of Live Streaming Commerce. *Computer Supported Cooperative Work: CSCW: An International Journal*, 31(4), 701–729. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10606-022-09439-2>
- Wijaya, A., Amanatin, E. L., Hapsari, Z. R., Oktarin, S. D., & Kismini, E. (2023). Perilaku Konsumsi dan Gaya Hidup Mahasiswa Perkotaan di Masa Pandemi COVID-19. In *Bookchapter Ekonomi Universitas Negeri Semarang* (Vol. 2, pp. 1–27). Universitas Negeri Semarang. <https://doi.org/10.15294/ie.v1i2.110>
- Wu, Y., & Huang, H. (2023). Influence of Perceived Value on Consumers' Continuous Purchase Intention in Live-Streaming E-Commerce—Mediated by Consumer Trust. *Sustainability (Switzerland)*, 15(5). <https://doi.org/10.3390/su15054432>
- Ye, X. M., Batool, H., & Huang, S. Z. (2023). The effect of e-commerce livestreaming services on customer loyalty: a test of the chain mediation model. *Journal of Innovation and Entrepreneurship*, 12(1). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s13731-023-00310-2>