

Online Reviews, Ratings and Trust: The Impact on Shopee Purchase Decisions for Millennial Consumers

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Abstract

Objective: This study aims to analyze the influence of online customer reviews and ratings on the purchase decisions of millennial consumers in Palembang City on the Shopee platform with trust as a mediating variable.

Research Methodology: The quantitative research approach was conducted using Partial Least Square Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with SmartPLS software. The sample consisted of 180 respondents who were selected by purposive sampling from millennial users of the Shopee platform in Palembang City.

Research Results: These findings reveal that online customer reviews and ratings positively and significantly influence trust and purchasing decisions. In addition, trust partially mediates the relationship between online reviews and ratings and purchasing decisions.

Conclusion: These findings confirm the importance of digital reputation management in the online marketing ecosystem, where e-commerce platform providers and sellers need to encourage the formation of credible customer reviews and ratings to build consumer trust.

Limitations: This study is limited by its cross-sectional design, focus on millennial Shoppe consumers, and reliance on self-reported data, which may involve bias despite mitigation through a clear and consistent instrument.

Contributions: This study enriches digital marketing literature by emphasizing the impact of online reviews, ratings, and trust on purchase decisions. It offers managerial insights for sellers and platforms to enhance review authenticity and consumer trust.

Keywords: online customer reviews, online customer ratings, trust, purchase decisions.

1. Introduction

The rise of e-commerce platforms is increasingly changing the shopping style of consumers, including people in Indonesia. By offering convenience in the form of shopping anywhere and anytime, online shopping through e-commerce is increasing every year. According to data from fortuneidn.com (2025) shows that 53.22% of internet users in Indonesia access e-commerce, namely Shopee in 2025. In other words, more than half of internet users in Indonesia choose Shopee as the main shopping platform. This achievement makes Shopee the number one shopping platform in Indonesia.

Purchasing decisions are the thinking in which individuals evaluate various options and decide on a product from the many products offered by the seller. Purchase decision is one of the stages in the buyer's decision-making process where consumers actually make purchase transactions. In the online purchase process, consumers cannot see or try products directly so they rely heavily on additional information from the platform as well as previous user experiences (Kavleen et al. 2024). Therefore, online customer reviews and online customer ratings are important sources of information that can affect the perception and trust of a product (Marcelo et al., 2024).

Online customer reviews are written by buyers after they make a transaction, while online customer ratings are numbers or stars given by customers to a specific product or service after making a purchase. Online customer assessment is an important indicator displayed by Shopee in the form of a one- to five-star assessment. This assessment provides quick conclusions about the performance of a product that has been purchased and how the experience with the seller's reputation is. These two elements are

classified as electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) which has a great impact on consumer views and Trusts (Kavleen & Singh, 2024). The online customer review feature on Shopee allows consumers to write down their experiences after buying products, either in the form of comments, testimonials, or real photos of the goods received. Thus, it can be said that online customer reviews have a function as a medium of communication between consumers that is effective in influencing shopping decisions (Slamet & Ulil Albab, 2023). In addition to reviews, millennial consumers also tend to want instant information, so star ratings are very helpful in accelerating the selection of selected products so that online customer assessments acts as a sign or quick signal for quality that is easy for consumers to understand before making a purchase (Kadek et al., 2022)

The prominence of online customer reviews and ratings significantly influences consumer's purchasing decisions. However, this high level of impact has also led to the rise of review and rating manipulation practices, which in turn raises concerns regarding their authenticity and reliability. The practice of manipulating reviews and ratings on e-commerce platforms has become a serious issue. Sellers, in order to increase their sales, often carry out manipulations such as creating fake accounts by using fake review services to create a better product image digitally. The appearance of fake reviews or giving star ratings that do not match the quality of the product actually makes consumers find products with positive reviews and high ratings, but it turns out to be disappointing after purchase. While these actions may seem profitable in the short term, they can undermine the integrity of the platform and create distrust of sellers and platforms. According to data from consumer response results through Reddit.com (2024) "Companies use fake online reviews, Youtube views, Twitter followers & Facebook likes to deceive customers" shows that reviews are often duplicated, not original or submitted with identical wording, frequently incentivized by reward system (e.g., "earn coins for reviews"), thereby intensifying the prevalence of review manipulation practices. This condition raises doubts among consumers, as the information displayed does not always reflect reality. As a result, the level of consumer trust has decreased. In other words, new reviews and ratings can only be truly effective in influencing purchase decisions if consumers first trust the authenticity of the information provided and perceive the seller and platform as credible. Thus trust becomes the determining factor in whether reviews and ratings actually impact purchasing decisions (Morgan & Hunt, 1994).

Previous research from (Haliza & Anasrulloh, 2023; Hanifah & Fadila, 2023; Kadek et al., 2022; Sukirman et al., 2023) shows that good reviews and high ratings can increase confidence levels as well as encourage purchasing choices. The implications of the importance of trust as a variable that bridges the gap between reviews and ratings and purchasing decisions are very strong. New reviews and ratings will be effective in influencing purchasing decisions if consumers have confidence in the authenticity of the information and the credibility of the seller or platform (Morgan & Hunt, 1994). Without trust, reviews and ratings are considered insufficient to drive a purchase decision. Therefore, it is necessary to conduct research to determine the influence of online customer reviews and online customer assessments on the purchase decisions of millennial consumers on Shopee by using trust as a factor that bridges the occurrence of these purchase decisions.

2. Literature Review and Hypothesis Development

2.1 Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM)

The Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) refers to the degree to which a person thinks or elaborates on an argument in the message received. The basic principle of ELM is that there are two paths to persuasion, namely: 1) the central route where the persuasion process occurs when individuals assess information deeply and rationally. Individuals have high motivation and sufficient ability to analyze the content of the message, as well as become more rational and careful in decision-making; 2) peripheral route where when individuals assess information quickly, they do not pay much attention to the content of the message in depth or it is enough to just look at simple instructions and cues because consumers

do not have the time or ability to process complex information and do not even have high motivation to analyze detailed information (Kitchen et al., 2014).

In the context of online shopping, online customer reviews represent the central route as they provide details of arguments and real experiences from consumers. In contrast, online customer ratings represent peripheral routes because they are a simple summary of ratings such as stars or numbers. Both factors can persuade changes in consumer attitudes so that they affect consumer confidence which ultimately has an impact on purchasing decisions (Moradi & Zihagh, 2022). Therefore, ELM explains the psychological mechanisms of how reviews and ratings work through different paths but together impact the purchasing decisions of millennial consumers.

2.2 Trust-Commitment Theory

The Trust-Commitment Theory of Relationship Marketing emphasizes that trust and commitment are the two main elements that determine the success of a long-term relationship between a consumer and a service provider or seller. According to this theory, trust arises when consumers believe that the seller is reliable, honest, and will not abuse their dependency. In the context of e-commerce, high ratings and positive reviews provide security guarantees that strengthen consumer confidence. When that trust is solid, consumers will not only make occasional purchases, but also be willing to return and even recommend the store to others. Therefore, trust-commitment theory emphasizes that transactions do not only depend on the quality of the product but also on the ability of the seller to build trust and maintain a long-term relationship with his or her consumers (Morgan & Hunt, 1994).

2.3 Online Customer Reviews

Online customer reviews are a form of electronic communication from consumers that contains experiences, opinions, and assessments of products and services on online platforms. This review is considered a form of electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) that has a great influence on consumer perception and purchasing decisions. Overall, indicators of valence, relevance, quantity, credibility, and usefulness in online customer reviews play a role in shaping consumer trust as well as influencing purchasing behavior (Kavleen & Singh, 2024). Consumer trust is formed when reviews contain positive assessments, according to consumer needs, a large number of reviews and written by people who are considered to provide honesty for the review so that consumers are confident that the purchased product or service is correct according to expectations (Zhu et al., 2010). If consumers by reading reviews can meet their expectations in assessing products or services, it can help them make alternative comparisons and ultimately encourage in speeding up the process of purchase decisions, then it can be said that online customer reviews have an influence on trust and purchase decisions (Sukirman et al., 2023).

H1 There is a positive and significant influence of online customer reviews to the trust of millennial consumers of Shopee users in Palembang City.

H2 There is a positive and significant influence of online customer reviews to the purchase decisions of millennial consumers of Shopee users in Palembang City.

2.4 Online Customer Rating

Online customer ratings are a form of numerical ratings that consumers give to a product or service, usually on a star scale (e.g. 1 to 5). Ratings are considered as a more concise and easy-to-understand quality indicator compared to review text, so they are often used as the main reference for consumers before deciding to buy. Overall, online customer assessment indicators such as assessment valence, number of assessments, variety of assessments and assessment trends provide a quantitative picture of the quality and popularity of a product (Chevalier & Mayzlin, 2006). This information complements online customer reviews in the form of text reviews in influencing consumer perceptions and purchasing decisions in e-commerce. In online shopping, online customer assessments are a tool that can reduce doubts in consumer perception (Zhou & Li, 2017). The higher the quality of the assessment, the higher the level of consumer trust. The quality of the assessment is reflected in a high average rating (close to five stars) that is consistently given in large numbers over time facilitates and affects consumer

perception in assessing the quality of products or services offered by sellers. The factors mentioned will increase consumer confidence in choosing products over other alternatives, thereby speeding up the purchase decision-making process (Sukirman et al., 2023).

- H3 There is a positive and significant influence of online customer ratings to the trust of millennial consumers of Shopee users in Palembang City.
- H4 There is a positive and significant influence of online customer ratings to the purchase decisions of millennial consumers of Shopee users in Palembang City.

2.5 Trust

Trust is an important element in the relationship between a consumer and a service provider or seller. In the context of online marketing, trust is defined as the consumer's belief that the seller or platform provider will act honestly and reliably, and possesses the ability to fulfill the promises offered. Trust is the basis for consumers to make purchase decisions because it can reduce the risks and uncertainties inherent in online transactions (McKnight et al., 2002). Trust can be reviewed from three main indicators, namely integrity, benevolence, and ability (Mayeir et al., 1995). The greater the confidence that the seller will keep their promises and that the product or service will meet expectations, the more likely consumers are to make a purchase, feel satisfied, make repeat purchases, and provide positive recommendations in the form of reviews or star ratings (Morgan & Hunt, 1994). Thus, trust has a positive influence on purchasing decisions

- H5 There is a positive and significant influence of trust on the purchase decisions of millennial consumers of Shopee users in Palembang City.

2.6 Purchasing Decision

Purchasing decisions are an important process that consumers go through both before and after a transaction. This process reflects how consumers select products, compare brands, make purchasing decisions, and evaluate their satisfaction post-purchase. Purchasing decisions involve the recognition of needs and the search for information through product selection and the selection of preferred brands that are considered to be able to meet the needs. Then consumers will evaluate alternatives to the available options which helps consumers minimize the risk and increase confidence in making choices before finally deciding a purchase and expressing their feelings after consuming or using the product (Marcelo et al., 2024). Positive, clear, and credible reviews will foster trust as consumers feel more confident that a product or seller is reliable. Click or tap here to enter text. (McKnight et al., 2002). This trust then becomes an important factor that bridges the relationship between online customer reviews and purchase decisions. A high rating usually indicates that the product or service is of high quality and in accordance with the seller's promises. A high volume of consistently positive ratings can enhance consumer confidence in making a purchase (Sukirman et al., 2023). This reflects consumers's belief that seller is capable of delivering products as expected. Such trust serves as a bridge toward a purchase decision, as consumers feel assured and become more willing to make a purchase. Therefore the higher the ratings given by previous buyers, the stronger the consumer's confidence and the greater their likelihood of making a purchase decision (McKnight et al., 2002).

- H6 There is a positive and significant influence of online customer reviews to the purchase decisions of millennial consumers of Shopee users in Palembang City through trust.
- H7 There is a positive and significant influence of online customer ratings to the purchase decisions of millennial consumers of Shopee users in Palembang City through trust.

3. Research Methods

This study uses a quantitative approach using SmartPLS3 software. The measurement of variables in this study uses the Likert scale, which is a method of measuring attitudes or opinions where respondents are asked to answer a questionnaire that requires them to show a level of agreement with the statement submitted by the researcher (Adang Sutedja, 2020). This study used 180 respondents who are millennial consumers of Shopee users aged between 29 to 44 years old that reside in Palembang City.

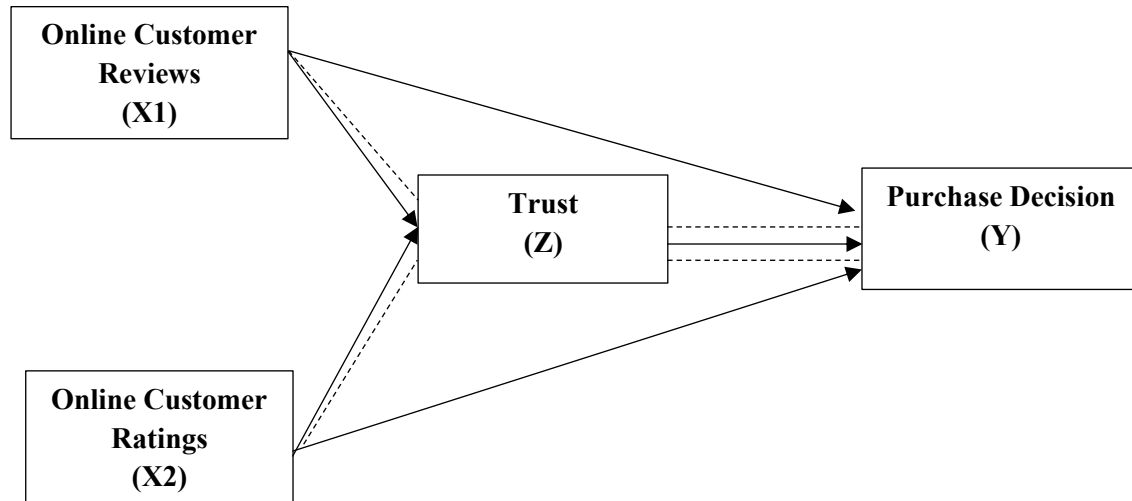


Figure 1. Research Conceptual Framework

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Descriptive Analysis

This study aims to determine the influence of online customer reviews and ratings on the purchase decisions of millennial consumers in Palembang City on the Shopee platform with trust as a mediating variable. The following is the profile of the respondents.

Table 1. Profile of Respondents

Respondent Profile	Category	Number (people)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Man	80	44,4
	Woman	100	55,6
Age	26-30 years old	75	41,7
	31-35 years old	60	33,3
	36-40 years old	35	19,4
	41-44 years old	10	5,6
Education	High School	25	13,9
	Diploma	40	22,2
	Bachelor (S1)	95	52,8
	Postgraduate (S2/S3)	20	11,1
Work	Student	30	16,7
	Public/Private Employees	100	55,6
	Entrepreneurial	30	16,7
	Other	20	11,1
Average Income/Month	< IDR. 3,000,000,-	50	27,8
	IDR 3,000,000,- - IDR 5,000,000,-	80	44,4
	> IDR. 5,000,000,-	50	27,8
Shopping Frequency at Shopee	1-2 times a month	55	30,6
	3-5 times a month	90	50,0
	> 5 times a month	35	19,4

Source: Data processed, 2025

Based on the data in Table 1, it is known that the study respondents consisted of 80 men and 100 women. The majority of respondents were between the ages of 26 to 30 years old with a percentage of 41.7% and the age group of 31 to 35 years old was 33.3%. This shows that most of the respondents are of productive age. Meanwhile, 90 respondents (50%) had made purchase on the Shopee platform 3 to 5 times in the past three months.

4.2 Data Analysis

4.2.1 Outer Model

The Outer Model Evaluation aims to ensure that the indicators used in the study are able to describe the variables to be measured appropriately and precisely. The tests carried out were the measurement of convergent validity by looking at the outer loading and average variance extracted (AVE) values and measuring the reliability of variables by looking at the composite reliability (CR) value. To test the validity of the convergence, the outer loading value is used. An indicator is declared to meet the convergent validity in the good category if the outer loading value > 0.708. (Hair, Joseip F, 2021).

Table 2. Outer Loading Test Results

Variable	Indicators		Outer Loading
Online Customer Reviews	OCRS1	Valence	Positive reviews convince me to buy
	OCRS2		Negative reviews makes me hesitant to buy
	OCRS3	Relevance	The reviews provide the information I need
	OCRS4	Volume	Few or no reviews often make me hesitant to buy
	OCRS5	Credibility	I trust that the reviewers are real buyers
	OCRS6	Benefit	I find reviews usefull for comparing different products
Online Customer Ratings	OCRA1	Valence	I trust product with high ratings
	OCRA2	Volume	A small number of ratings makes me hesitant to purchase
	OCRA3	Variance	I trust product when most ratings are consistent
	OCRA4	Trend	The recent decline in ratings makes me hesitant to buy
Trust	T1	Integrity	I trust the seller will keep the promises as described
	T2	Benevolence	I doubt the seller would help me if something went wrong
	T3	Ability	I trust the seller will provide the best services
Purchase Decision	KP1	Product Choice	Reviews and ratings influence my product choices
	KP2	Brand choice	I prefer to buy brands with higher ratings
	KP3	Alternative Evaluation	I use reviews and ratings to compare products
	KP4	Purchase	I decide to purchase only after checking reviews and ratings
	FP5	Post purchase	I rarely leaves reviews even after buying a product

Source: SmartPLS processed data, 2025

Based on Table 2, it can be seen that the outer loading value of each indicator is > 0.7 so that the eighteen indicators studied in the study are valid. This shows that each indicator is able to accurately represent the variables it is indeed to measure and can be trusted to be used in the next stage of analysis. After the outer loading test is carried out and all indicators meet the minimum limit, the next step is to test the validity of the convergence through the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value. This test aims to see how much variance of the indicator can be explained by its variables. A latent variable is declared to be convergently valid if the AVE value is > 0.5 (Hair, 2022). The results of the calculation of the AVE value for each variable can be seen in the following table: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Table 3. Average Variance Extracted (AVE) Test Results

	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Trust	0.609

Purchase Decision	0.606
Online Customer Ratings	0.619
Online Customer Reviews	0.573

Source: SmartPLS processed data, 2025

Based on Table 3, all research variables have an average variance extracted (AVE) value of > 0.50 . The online customer review shows an AVE value of 0.573. The online customer ratings shows an AVE value of 0.619. The trust shows an AVE value of 0.609. The purchase decision shows an AVE value of 0.606. Thus, all indicators in this study effectively represent their latent variables and are appropriate for further analysis.

Table 4. Composite Reliability Test Results

	Composite Reliability
Trust	0.824
Purchase Decision	0.885
Online Customer Ratings	0.866
Online Customer Reviews	0.889

Source: SmartPLS processed data, 2025

Based on Table 4, all variables in the study shows CR value of > 0.70 , namely online customer reviews at 0.889, online customer ratings at 0.866, trust at 0.824, and purchase decisions at 0.885. Therefore all variables are considered reliable and can proceed to the next stage of testing.

As the research instrument meets both validity and reliability criteria, the model can be continued to the structural testing stage (inner model). The configuration of the relationship between variables in this study is illustrated in the path algorithm diagram below.

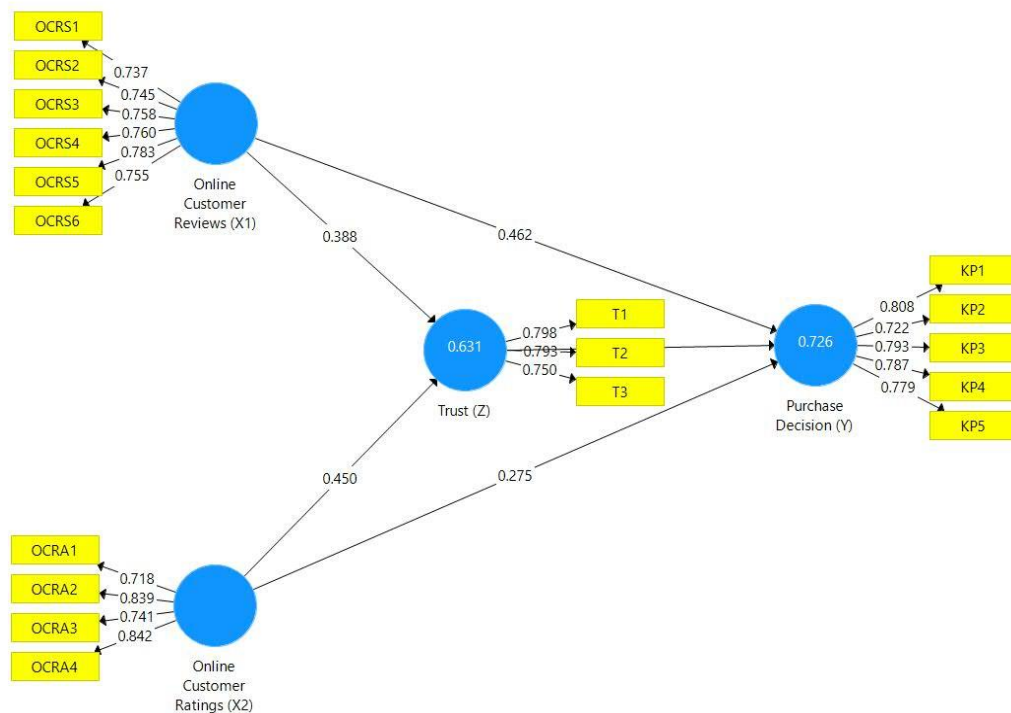


Figure 2. SmartPLS Algorithm Test Results
Source: SmartPLS processed data, 2025

4.2.2 Structural Test (Inner Model)

The inner model in this study is used to analyze the causal relationship between variables that have been determined in a conceptual framework. The variables of online customer reviews and online customer ratings are placed as independent variables that are assumed to have a direct influence on the purchase decisions of millennial consumers on Shopee, either directly or indirectly through trust as a mediating variable. Thus, trust acts as a psychological mechanism that strengthens or weakens the information obtained from reviews and assessments of purchase decisions.

The inner model test was carried out through path coefficient analysis to see the direction and strength of influence between variables. Then it uses the R-Square value (R^2) to assess how much the dependent variable is explained by the independent variable. Then to determine the significance of each relationship, a bootstrapping procedure is used so that a T-Statistic or P-Value value is obtained. Furthermore, the effect size (f^2) and predictive relevance (Q^2) were analyzed to strengthen the results of the structural model evaluation. Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) is used and evaluation is carried out to ensure that the overall structural model has a good level of compatibility.

Table 5. Collinearity (VIF) Test Results

Indicators	VIF
KP1	1.922
KP2	1.595
KP3	1.762
KP4	1.770
FP5	1.753
OCRA1	1.373
OCRA2	1.898
OCRA3	1.460
OCRA4	1.937
OCRS1	1.648
OCRS2	1.832
OCRS3	1.946
OCRS4	1.705
OCRS5	1.894
OCRS6	1.732
T1	1.412
T2	1.394
T3	1.226

Source: SmartPLS processed data, 2025

Based on Table 5, the indicators on the variables of online customer reviews, online customer ratings, trust and purchase decisions have a VIF value of < 5 , so it can be concluded that there is no multicollinearity between indicators in each variable, so that all indicators can be used in the research.

Table 6. R^2 Test Results

Variable	R Square	R Square Adjusted
Trust	0.631	0.627
Purchase Decision	0.726	0.722

Source: SmartPLS processed data, 2025

Based on Table 6, the R-Square value for the trust variable is 0.631 which shows that 63.1% of millennial consumer trust variables can be explained by online customer reviews and online customer ratings while the rest is influenced by other factors outside the research model. This value is included in the moderate category. Furthermore, the millennial consumer purchase decision variable has an R-Square value of 0.726, which means that 72.6% of millennial consumers' purchase decisions on Shopee are influenced by online customer reviews and online customer ratings, while the rest is explained by other variables outside the study. The value is also moderate. This shows that the model is able to explain the influence between variables quite well.

Table 7. F^2 Test Results

	Trust	Purchase Decision
Trust		0.045
Purchase Decision		
Online Customer Ratings	0.202	0.085
Online Customer Reviews	0.150	0.250

Source: Data by SmartPLS 3, 2025

Based on Table 7, online customer ratings is proven to be the most influential factor in driving millennial consumer purchase decisions at Shopee with an influence value of 0.250 on purchase decisions, this variable is in the medium and dominant category compared to other variables. On the other hand, online customer ratings had a small influence on the purchase decisions of millennial consumers on Shopee with a value of 0.085, although they were still able to form trust moderately (0.202). Meanwhile, trust itself has not been able to exert a strong direct influence on purchasing decisions (0.045), so its role is more appropriate as a mediator than the main driver. Thus, millennial consumers' purchasing decisions on Shopee are more influenced by the content of reviews in the form of quality information than just star ratings by customers. This corroborates that potential buyers tend to trust the real experience of previous users more than star ratings alone.

Table 8. Q^2 Test Results

Variable	Q^2
Trust	0.631
Purchase Decision	0.726

Source: SmartPLS processed data, 2025

Based on Table 8, the model has strong predictive capabilities. The trust variable obtained a Q^2 of 0.631, which means that more than 63% of the predictions were successfully explained by the model variables. The purchase decision reached a Q^2 at 0.726, which means that the model is able to predict the purchasing behavior of millennial consumers on Shopee up to 72.6% accurately. This proves that the research model is not only statistically significant but also relevant in practice because it is able to explain the behavior of millennial consumers at Shopee in real terms.

Table 9. Direct Relationship Significance Test Results

	Original Sample (O)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values	Information
Trust -> Purchase Decision	0.183	2.805	0.005	Significant Positives
Online Customer Ratings -> Trust	0.450	6.123	0.000	Significant Positives

Online Customer Reviews -> Purchase Decision	0.275	4.022	0.000	Significant Positives
Online Customer Reviews -> Trust	0.388	5.034	0.000	Significant Positives
Online Customer Reviews -> Purchase Decisions	0.462	6.463	0.000	Significant Positives

Source: SmartPLS3 processed data, 2025

Based on Table 9, it can be seen that all relationships between variables show a statistically significant influence (P-Value < 0.05). The online customer ratings variable had a positive and significant influence on trust ($\beta = 0.450$; $T = 6.123$; $P = 0.000$) or against the purchase decision ($\beta = 0.275$; $T = 4.022$; $P = 0.000$). This shows that the higher the star rating given by previous buyers, the greater the trust and buying tendency that appears in potential buyers. Furthermore, the online customer review variable was also shown to have a significant and even more dominant influence on trust ($\beta = 0.388$; $T = 5.034$; $P = 0.000$) also against the purchase decision ($\beta = 0.462$; $T = 6.463$; $P = 0.000$) which corroborates that potential buyers not only see the star's reflection but rather believe in the real experience written by previous buyers. Then trust was also shown to play an important role in driving purchasing decisions ($\beta = 0.183$; $T = 2.805$; $P = 0.005$) where trust acts as a psychological link that strengthens millennial consumers' purchasing decisions on Shopee after they read reviews and ratings from previous buyers.

In addition to the direct influence between variables, testing was also carried out on indirect relationships where trust plays a role as a mediating variable in the relationship between independent variables, namely online customer reviews and online customer ratings, then the dependent variable, namely purchase decisions. A relationship is declared to have significant mediation if the T-Statistic value > 1.96 or the P-Value < 0.05 in the indirect path. Furthermore, the power of mediation can be further analyzed by comparing the direct and indirect relationships between variables. It can be said to be full mediation if the independent variable is not able to significantly affect the dependent variable without going through the mediator variable. Partial mediation happens if the independent variable is able to affect the dependent variable directly or indirectly by involving the mediator variable. Unmediated happens if the independent variable is able to directly affect the dependent variable without involving the mediator variable. The results of the significance test on indirect relationships are shown as follows:

Table 10. Indirect Relationships Test Results

	Original Sample (O)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values	Information
Online Customer Ratings -> Trust				Significant/Partial Mediation
-> Purchase Decision	0.082	2.425	0.016	
Online Customer Reviews -> Trust				
-> Purchase Decision	0.071	2.520	0.012	Significant/Partial Mediation

Source: SmartPLS3 processed data, 2025

Based on Table 10, the results of the indirect effects test is not indicate that trust significantly mediates the influence of online customer ratings and online customer reviews on purchase decisions. This is supported by T-Statistics values greater than 1,96 and P-Values below 0,05 for both indirect paths, confirming that the mediating effect is statistictzally significant.

Although the value of indirect influence is relatively smaller than direct influence, these findings still show that millennial consumers' purchasing decisions on Shopee are not only driven by directly visible information such as reviews and ratings but also by psychological Trusts formed afterwards. So that

trust acts as an emotional bridge that strengthens the confidence of potential buyers before deciding to buy. It can be concluded that the mediation that occurs is Partial because both of the direct and indirect influence are significant.

Table 11. Model Fit Test Results

	Saturated Model	Estimated Model
SRMR	0.070	0.070
NFI	0.794	0.794

Source: SmartPLS3 processed data, 2025

Based on Table 11, the SRMR value is 0.070 both in the saturated model and the estimated model. This value is below the threshold of 0.08 which indicates that the difference between the original data and the model's prediction results is relatively small so that the model can be said to be in accordance with the actual conditions. In addition, the NFI value obtained is 0.794, close to the ideal limit of 0.80, but still show that the model has an adequate match. With the fulfillment of the two fit model indicators, this research model has met the feasibility criteria statistically and suitable to be continued to the hypothesis testing stage.

Table 12. Hypothesis Test Results

	Relationship	Original Sample (O)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values	Ket
H1	Online Customer Reviews -> Trust	0.388	5.034	0.000	Accepted
H2	Online Customer Reviews -> Purchase Decisions	0.462	6.463	0.000	Accepted
H3	Online Customer Ratings -> Trust	0.450	6.123	0.000	Accepted
H4	Online Customer Ratings -> Purchase Decision	0.275	4.022	0.000	Accepted
H5	Trust -> Purchase Decision	0.183	2.805	0.005	Accepted
H6	Online Customer Reviews -> Trust -> Purchase Decision	0.071	2.520	0.012	Accepted
H7	Online Customer Ratings -> Trust -> Purchase Decision	0.082	2.425	0.016	Accepted

Source: SmartPLS processed data 3, 2025

Based on Table 12, the hypothesis testing results in this study are as follows:

H1 Online customer reviews have a positive and significant effect on the trust of millennial Shopee users in Palembang City.

The results of the analysis showed that online customer reviews had a positive and significant effect on Trust with a coefficient value of 0.388 and t-statistics of 5.034 ($p = 0.000$). This means that the more positive reviews consumers read, the higher their level of trust in the product and the seller. The H1 hypothesis is therefore acceptable, which means that an increase in online customer reviews will potentially increase millennial consumers' confidence in shopping on Shopee.

H2 Online customer reviews have a positive and significant effect on the purchase decision of millennial Shopee users in Palembang City.

The results of the hypothesis test showed that there was a positive and significant relationship between online customer reviews and purchase decision was also proven to be significant with a coefficient value of 0.462 and t-statistics of 6.463 ($p = 0.000$). These findings indicate that customer reviews play a role as the main consideration for consumers in determining purchasing decisions without going through an intermediary first. The H2 hypothesis is therefore acceptable, which means that an increase in online customer reviews will potentially improve millennial consumers' purchasing decisions to shop on Shopee.

H3 Online customer ratings have a positive and significant effect on the trust of millennial Shopee users in Palembang City.

The results of the hypothesis test showed that there was a positive and significant relationship between online customer ratings to trust with a coefficient value of 0.450 and t-statistics of 6.123 ($p = 0.000$). This means that the higher the rating given by other consumers, the greater trust is formed. The H3 hypothesis is therefore acceptable, which means that an increase in online customer ratings will potentially increase millennial consumers' confidence in shopping on Shopee.

H4 Online customer ratings have a positive and significant effect on the purchase decision of millennial Shopee users in Palembang City.

The results of the hypothesis test showed that there was a positive and significant relationship between online customer ratings to purchase decisions with a coefficient value of 0.275 and t-statistics of 4.022 ($p = 0.000$). This confirms that star ratings or product scores are a quick indicator for consumers before making a purchase. The H4 hypothesis is therefore acceptable, which means that an increase in online customer ratings will potentially improve millennial consumers' purchasing decisions on Shopee.

H5 Trust have a positive and significant effect on the purchase decision of millennial Shopee users in Palembang City.

The results of the hypothesis test showed that there was a positive and significant relationship between trust in the purchase decision with a coefficient value of 0.183 and t-statistics of 2.805 ($p = 0.005$). Thus, the higher the consumer's trust in the product or platform, the greater their tendency to buy. Therefore, the H5 hypothesis is acceptable, which means that an increase in trust will potentially increase the purchasing decisions of millennial consumers shopping on Shopee.

H6 Online customer reviews positively and significantly influence the purchase decision of millennial Shopee users in Palembang City through trust as mediating variable

The results of the hypothesis test showed that online customer reviews had an indirect effect on purchase decisions through trust with a mediation value of 0.071 and t-statistics of 2.520 ($p = 0.012$). This proves that part of the influence of reviews on purchase decisions occurs through the formation of trust first. The H6 hypothesis is therefore acceptable, which means that an increase in online customer reviews has the potential to improve purchasing decisions by first increasing millennial consumers' confidence in shopping on Shopee.

H7 Online customer ratings positively and significantly influence the purchase decision of millennial Shopee users in Palembang City through trust as mediating variable

The results of the hypothesis test showed that online customer assessment had an indirect effect on purchase decisions through trust with a coefficient value of 0.082 and t-statistics of 2.425 ($p = 0.016$). Thus, trust acts as a bridge in strengthening the influence of valuation on purchase decisions. Therefore, the H7 hypothesis is acceptable, which means that an increase in online customer reviews has the potential to improve purchase decisions by first increasing millennial consumers' confidence to shop on Shopee.

4.3 The Influence of Online Customer Reviews on Trust

The results of the analysis show that online customer reviews have a positive and significant effect on trust with a coefficient value of 0.388, t-statistics of 5,034 and p-value of 0.000 which indicates that the

more positive and informative the reviews available on the Shopee platform, the higher the level of trust formed in consumers towards the seller and the products offered. Theoretically, these findings support ELM's assertion that persuasive messages can be processed through two routes, namely the central route and the peripheral route. In the context of this study, reviews that contain in-depth explanations of previous buyers' experiences, such as product quality, completeness, and delivery speed will be processed through the central route so as to generate strong trust because it is based on in-depth analysis and rational considerations.

These results are in line with previous research from which found that online customer reviews (Dwi Ovaliana, 2022; Kamisa et al., 2022) play an important role in building consumer trust in e-commerce platforms. Thus, it can be affirmed that online customer reviews are not only a complementary element in product display but also the main persuasive instrument in shaping millennial consumer trust in Shopee.

4.4 The Influence of Online Customer Reviews on Purchase Decisions

The results of the analysis show that online customer reviews have a positive and significant effect on purchase decisions with a coefficient value of 0.462, t-statistics of 6.463 and p-value of 0.000 which indicates that the more positive and informative the reviews available on the Shopee platform, the higher the level of purchase decisions formed in consumers towards the seller and the products offered. This finding can be explained through the ELM theory where consumers conduct an in-depth analysis (central route) of reviews as a rational consideration before buying. This is also consistent with previous research from (Kadeik et al., 2022; Putri & Leistari, 2022) that online customer review play an important role in shaping purchasing decisions on e-commerce platforms. Thus, it can be concluded that online customer reviews are not just an additional feature but are the main persuasive factor that influences millennial consumers' purchasing decisions on Shopee.

4.5 The Influence of Online Customer Ratings on Trust

The results of the analysis show that online customer assessments have a positive and significant effect on purchase decisions with a coefficient value of 0.450, t-statistics of 6.123 and p-value of 0.000 which means that the higher the rating given by the previous buyer, the stronger of the consumer confidence in the seller and products on Shopee. This finding is in line with the ELM concept where assessment functions as a peripheral route, namely a quality signal that is easily processed quickly by potential buyers. Potential buyers don't need to read long information but just by looking at the stars to make a decision on whether the seller is trustworthy or not. This is in line with the results of research from (Dwi Ovaliana, 2022; Putri & Leistari, 2022) that online customer ratings have an effect on trust. This condition is very relevant to the behavior of millennial consumers who tend to be practical and visually oriented.

4.6 The Influence of Online Customer Ratings on Purchase Decisions

The results of the analysis show that online customer assessments have a positive and significant effect on purchase decisions with coefficient value of 0.275, t-statistics of 4.022 and a p-value of 0.000 which means that the higher the star rating given by other users, the greater the confidence of potential buyers in the seller and the products offered by Shopee. Based on ELM theory, assessment is embedded in the peripheral route, which is a simple signal that consumers use to make decisions without having to conduct an in-depth evaluation. This is in accordance with the characteristics of millennial consumers who tend to be practical and based on the experience of other users. This is in line with the results of a study that found the same results that customer ratings influence the impulse of purchasing decisions. (Yusliani et al., 2023)

4.7 The Influence of Trust on Purchasing Decisions

The results of the analysis showed that trust had a positive and significant effect on purchase decisions with a coefficient value of 0.183, t-statistics of 2.805 and a p-value of 0.005 which means that the higher the level of consumer trust in sellers and the Shopee platform, the greater their tendency to make transactions. These findings are in line with the trust-commitment model theory which states that trust is the main foundation in the formation of purchase intentions and actions, especially in situations involving uncertainty such as online shopping. On the Shopee platform, millennial consumers tend to see various trust attributes such as official store labels, refund guarantees, positive reviews and seller responses as proof of credibility before they hit the checkout button. This is in line with research from (Afriani et al., 2023; Putri & Leistari, 2022) those who found that trust has an influence on purchasing decisions. Sellers who are able to maintain their reputation and provide a sense of security to consumers will have a much higher chance of buying conversions.

4.8 The Influence of Online Customer Reviews on Trust-Mediated Purchasing Decisions

The results of the hypothesis test showed that online customer reviews had an indirect effect on purchase decisions through trust with a mediation value of 0.071 and t-statistics of 2.520 ($p = 0.012$). This proves that part of the influence of reviews on purchase decisions occurs through the formation of trust first. Consumers don't just read reviews as additional information, but actually use it as a basis to assess the seller's credibility before deciding to buy. These findings reinforce ELM's perspective where customer reviews serve as a central route for consumers who want to understand other users' experiences in depth, as well as a peripheral route for consumers who see the number of positive reviews to feel confident. This is in line with research from (Putri & Lestari, 2022). Therefore, Shopee not only needs to collect a lot of reviews but also has to maintain quality consistency so that consumer trust is maintained.

4.9 The Influence of Online Customer Ratings on Trust-Mediated Purchasing Decisions

The results of the hypothesis test showed that online customer ratings had an indirect effect on purchase decisions through trust with a coefficient value of 0.082 and t-statistics of 2.425 ($p = 0.016$). This shows that a high star rating on a seller does not necessarily directly encourage consumers to buy but first builds trust in the seller and the product offered. The mediation process is in line with the view of trust-commitment theory which states that trust is formed from personal Trusts before being realized in the act of purchase. Thus, online customer assessments work effectively if they are able to form trust first, not just become a visual number. This is also in line with research from (Afriani et al., 2023).

5. Conclusion

5.1. Conclusion

Based on the results of data analysis and testing that have been carried out, all relationships between variables in this study are declared positive and significant. This shows that online customer reviews and online customer ratings have a strong direct influence on trust and purchase decisions in millennial consumers on the Shopee platform. In addition, trust has been shown to play a role as a partial mediating variable in strengthening the influence of online customer reviews and online customer ratings on purchase decisions. Thus, it can be concluded that the better the quality of reviews and ratings given by previous customers, the higher the level of new consumer trust which ultimately encourages more convincing purchase intentions and decisions.

5.2. Research Limitations

This research has several limitations that need to be considered. First, the data used is cross-sectional so that it cannot see changes in consumer behavior over a certain period of time. Second, the object of the research is only limited to Shopee users from millennial consumers so that the results cannot necessarily be generalized to other age groups or different e-commerce platforms. Third, as the data were collected through self-reports, potential subjective bias may exist. To mitigate this, the instruments were designed with clear, concise, and consistent language to elicit responses that closely reflects respondent's actual perceptions and experiences.

5.3. Suggestions

This study contributes to the existing literature on consumer behaviour with the digital marketing context, particularly regarding online customer reviews, online customers ratings, and trust as key determinants of purchasing decisions. For practitioners, especially sellers on the Shopee platform, the findings highlight the importance of encouraging customers to provide honest and informative feedback following their purchases. Sellers may consider offering incentives such as coupons, discounts, or loyalty points to motivate high quality reviews. Furthermore, Shopee as an e-commerce platform is advised to enhance its review verification mechanisms to strengthen consumer confidence in the authenticity of displayed information.

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