

FROM REVIEWS TO REVENUE: THE ROLE OF PRODUCT QUALITY, ONLINE CUSTOMER REVIEW AND BRAND IMAGE IN SAMSUNG'S SHOPEE APPLICATION SALES

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Article history:

Received
27 February 2025

Revised
9 May 2025

Accepted
21 August 2025

Available online
30 September 2025

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Abstract:

Background: The growth of e-commerce had transformed consumer purchasing behavior, particularly in online marketplaces like Shopee. Samsung, a leading smartphone brand, relied on product quality and online customer reviews to influence consumer decisions. This study examined how these factors shaped purchasing decisions, with brand image serving as a mediating variable in this relationship.

Purpose: This study explores how product quality and online customer reviews affect purchasing decisions, considering brand image as a mediating factor.

Design/methodology/approach: A quantitative research approach was employed utilizing Partial Least Squares-Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) to analyze the relationships between the studied variables. Data were gathered from 160 Shopee users through structured questionnaires, analyzing the relationships between product quality, online customer reviews, brand image, and purchasing decisions using convenience sampling.

Finding/Result: Findings show that product quality and brand image strongly influenced purchase intent, while online reviews affected brand image but not purchasing decisions, underscoring the key role of brand perception in e-commerce.

Conclusion: This study confirmed that product quality and brand image were key determinants of purchasing behavior, emphasizing the importance of brand perception in online consumer decision-making.

Originality/value (State of the art): This study enriches the existing digital marketing literature by exploring the integrated impact of product quality and online customer reviews on consumer purchase decisions, with brand image serving as an intermediary factor. The findings provide valuable insights for e-commerce businesses, enabling them to refine branding strategies, strengthen consumer trust, and enhance overall online sales performance.

Keywords: product quality, online customer reviews, brand image, purchasing decisions, consumer behavior

How to Cite:

Kuswibowo, C., Santoso, A., Saberan, F., & Raharjo, T. (2025). From reviews to revenue: The role of product quality, online customer review and brand image in Samsung's Shopee application sales. Indonesian Journal of Business and Entrepreneurship, 11(3), 530. <https://doi.org/10.17358/ijbe.11.3.530>

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INTRODUCTION

Technological advancements had significantly influenced consumer behavior and market dynamics in the era of globalization and digital transformation. One of the most notable developments was the proliferation of e-commerce platforms, which had revolutionized how consumers purchased goods and services (Anggriani et al. 2024; Pandey, R., Gupta, R., & Pathak, 2021). The rise of digital marketing strategies, particularly online customer reviews and product quality perceptions, had played a crucial role in shaping consumer purchasing decisions. Companies operating in the e-commerce sector should understand these factors to maintain competitiveness and enhance brand loyalty (Kotler & Keller, 2017). In this regard, Samsung, a leading smartphone brand, had emerged as a dominant player in online marketplaces such as Shopee. This research examines the influence of product quality and online customer reviews on consumers' purchase decisions for Samsung products on Shopee, with brand image as an intervening variable (Kuswibowo & Murti, 2021).

The Table 1 presents data from the IDC Quarterly Mobile Phone Tracker (April 15, 2024) regarding the top five global smartphone companies by shipments, market share, and year-over-year growth for Q1 2024. The Q1 2024 global smartphone market saw a 7.8% year-over-year (YoY) growth, with total shipments reaching 289.4 million units. Samsung maintained its position as the market leader with 60.1 million units shipped, though it experienced a 0.7% decline from Q1 2023. Apple, which ranked second, faced a significant 9.6% drop in shipments due to increasing competition and changing consumer preferences. In contrast, Xiaomi saw an impressive 33.8% YoY growth, securing 14.1% market share by capitalizing on the demand for affordable yet high-quality smartphones. Transsion, which included brands like Tecno, Infinix, and Itel, recorded the fastest growth at 84.9% YoY, driven by its substantial presence in emerging markets. Meanwhile, OPPO saw an 8.5% decline, reflecting differentiation and market positioning challenges.

These trends highlighted a shift in consumer purchasing behavior, with budget-friendly brands gaining momentum while premium brands like Apple experienced stagnation in demand. Despite its slight decline, Samsung remained dominant due to its brand strength and diversified product range. The significant growth of Xiaomi and Transsion suggested a rising

preference for cost-effective options, particularly in Asia and Africa. The overall market recovery indicated improving smartphone demand, but brands should continuously innovate and adapt to changing consumer expectations (Rahman et al. 2019). Brand loyalty, pricing strategies, and online customer engagement would be critical factors shaping the competitive landscape in the global smartphone industry (Almestarihi, 2024; Brakus, J. J., Schmitt, B. H., & Zarantonello, 2009).

The swift growth of the e-commerce sector has transformed conventional business models, providing consumers with more convenient and accessible shopping experiences. Shopee, one of the largest e-commerce platforms in Southeast Asia, has gained widespread popularity among smartphone consumers (Kumala, 2016). A prominent smartphone brand, Samsung, has leveraged Shopee's platform to reach a broader audience and strengthen its market position. According to market data, Samsung has consistently maintained a high market share in Shopee's smartphone category, indicating a strong consumer preference for its products (Fauziah et al. 2023). However, the increasing reliance on online customer reviews as a decision-making tool raises questions about how these reviews influence brand perception and ultimately affect purchasing behavior (Liu et al. 2021).

Consumer behavior research has shown that product quality significantly influenced purchase decisions (Baier et al. 2025). Products of superior quality that satisfied or surpassed customer expectations would likely elicit favorable reviews and cultivate brand loyalty (F Tjiptono, 2014). Conversely, negative reviews highlighting product defects or performance issues could deter potential buyers. This phenomenon underscores the importance of product quality in shaping brand image and influencing consumer trust in an online shopping environment (Laksmi & Oktafani, 2016; Moraes et al. 2020; Pritjahjono et al. 2023). Since Shopee was a key e-commerce platform for smartphone purchases, understanding how consumers evaluated Samsung products based on quality and reviews was essential for marketers and brand managers (Prakoso & Rusdianto, 2023).

Despite Samsung's strong market presence, the factors influencing consumer purchasing decisions on Shopee remained complex and multifaceted. Previous studies had indicated that online customer reviews significantly impacted brand perception and influenced consumers' final purchase choices (Haryandika & Santra, 2021;

Prakoso & Rusdianto, 2023). While positive reviews could enhance a product's appeal, negative feedback could create doubts about its quality and reliability. Product quality also played a crucial role in determining consumer satisfaction and purchase intention (Mia Anggraini Eka Putri ; Supriyono, 2022). Given these dynamics, it is necessary to examine the extent to which product quality and online customer reviews contribute to the decision to purchase Samsung smartphones on Shopee. Moreover, the role of brand image as a mediating factor in this relationship continues to be a significant area of interest, highlighting the need for further in-depth investigation to better understand its influence on consumer decision-making and purchasing behavior (Rimiyati & Widodo, 2014)

In practical terms, this study provides strategic insights for businesses within the e-commerce sector. Companies can utilize online customer reviews to improve brand perception and strengthen consumer trust. Moreover, understanding the role of product quality in influencing brand image can help businesses refine their product development and quality assurance strategies (Akbar et al. 2022). Shopee and similar e-commerce platforms can also benefit from these insights by improving review credibility mechanisms, enhancing consumer engagement, and fostering a more transparent marketplace (Haryandika & Santra, 2021).

While this study provides valuable insights, it is important to acknowledge certain limitations. First, the findings may not be generalizable to other smartphone brands or e-commerce platforms. The study focuses exclusively on Samsung products, and consumer behavior may vary for other brands with different market positioning and customer bases. Second, convenience sampling may introduce potential biases, as respondents may not fully represent the broader Shopee consumer population. Future research could address these

limitations by examining multiple smartphone brands and employing more diverse sampling techniques. Additionally, alternative research methodologies, such as experimental studies or longitudinal analyses, could be used to validate the findings.

Understanding these factors can help businesses optimize their marketing strategies and improve customer engagement. This study seeks to answer the following research questions: (1) How does product quality influence the purchase of Samsung smartphones on Shopee? (2) How does online customer review influence purchasing decisions? (3) How does brand image mediate the relationship between product quality, online customer reviews, and purchase decisions?

This study employs a robust methodological approach to address these research questions, utilizing Partial Least Squares (PLS) analysis to assess relationships between variables. The research sample consists of 160 respondents selected using convenience sampling techniques. By focusing on Samsung smartphone consumers on Shopee, the study aims to provide a nuanced understanding of the factors shaping digital consumer behavior.

This research contributes to both theoretical and practical discussions in the fields of digital marketing and consumer behavior. Theoretically, it builds upon existing literature by integrating key determinants of purchasing decisions within an e-commerce framework. Prior research has highlighted the importance of these factors individually, but few studies have examined their combined effects, particularly in the context of high-involvement products like smartphones (Mahmoud et al. 2018). This study bridges this gap by investigating how product quality and online reviews jointly influence consumer decisions while accounting for the mediating role of brand image.

Table 1. Top 5 Companies in the Smartphone industry 5 Companies, Worldwide Smartphone Shipment, Market Share and Year-Over-Year Growth, Q1 2024 (Preliminary Results, shipment in millions of units)

Company	1Q24 Shipments	1Q24 Market Share	1Q23 Shipments	1Q23 Market Share	Y-OY Change
Samsung	60.1	20.8%	60.5	22.5%	-0.7%
Apple	50.1	17.3%	55.4	20.7%	-9.6%
Xiaomi	40.8	14.1%	30.5	11.4%	33.8%
Transision	28.5	9.9%	15.4	5.7%	84.9%
OPPO	25.2	8.7%	27.6	10.3%	-8.5%
Others	84.7	29.3%	79.0	29.4%	7.2%
Total	289.4	100.0%	268.5	100.0%	7.8%

Understanding consumer purchasing behavior in an increasingly digital marketplace is essential for business success (Annisa Giwang Cempaka; Triana Rahajeng Hadiprawoto, 2025). This study investigates the influence of product quality and online customer reviews on Samsung smartphone purchase decisions on Shopee, with brand image as an intervening variable. The research aims to provide valuable insights for marketers, brand managers, and e-commerce platforms by examining these relationships. The findings will contribute to theoretical knowledge and practical strategies for enhancing consumer trust, optimizing digital marketing efforts, and strengthening brand positioning in the competitive smartphone industry. Through a rigorous methodological approach, this study seeks to bridge the gap between consumer perceptions and strategic decision-making in e-commerce environments (Remedi-Rumi & Arzuaga-Williams, 2024).

METHODS

This section outlined the research design, data collection methods, sample selection, research instruments, and data analysis techniques used in this study. A rigorous methodological approach was adopted to ensure that the findings accurately reflect the impact of product quality and online customer reviews on Samsung smartphone purchase decisions in Shopee.

The research process began with an initial exploration of consumer behavior by observing individuals within the researcher's immediate environment. Based on these preliminary insights, the research problem was formulated to guide the investigation. A comprehensive review of relevant theoretical frameworks was then conducted to support the conceptual understanding of the variables involved. This theoretical foundation informed the development of appropriate data collection methods, the construction of research instruments, and the selection of statistical techniques for data analysis.

The study was conducted over six months, from March 2024 to August 2024, and focused on consumers residing in Tangerang. The target population was individuals who purchased through the Shopee online marketplace. By concentrating on this specific demographic, the research aimed to obtain a contextual understanding of online consumer behavior within an urban Indonesian setting, with particular attention to

the dynamics of digital retail interactions facilitated by e-commerce platforms.

Primary data were collected using structured online questionnaires distributed to Shopee users who had purchased Samsung smartphones within the past year. The questionnaire consisted of closed-ended questions to measure respondents' perceptions of product quality, online customer reviews, brand image, and purchase decisions. A five-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree) was used to measure responses (Sugiyono, 2017; van de Water et al. 2024). The questionnaire was pre-tested with a small group of respondents to ensure clarity, reliability, and validity before full-scale data collection.

The research instrument was developed based on validated scales from previous studies:

- Product Quality: Measured using indicators such as performance, durability, reliability, and design (Fandy Tjiptono, 2015).
- Online Customer Reviews: Measured based on content credibility, review volume, and review valence (Liu et al. 2021).
- Brand Image: Assessed using brand recognition, trust, and perceived brand value (Kotler & Keller, 2017).
- Purchase Decision: Measured through product preference, purchase intent, and post-purchase satisfaction (Cheung & Thadani, 2012).

This study employed a quantitative research design with a causal-explanatory approach. The causal design was used to identify cause-and-effect relationships among product quality, online customer reviews, brand image, and purchase decisions. The research model was tested using Partial Least Squares-Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM), a statistical technique that simultaneously examined multiple relationships among latent variables (Ghozali, 2014). PLS-SEM suited complex models involving multiple independent and mediating variables (M Hair J.F. & Sarstedt, 2017).

The population of this study consisted of consumers who had purchased Samsung smartphones from Shopee. Since the number of Shopee users who purchased Samsung products was unavailable, non-probability sampling techniques were applied. Specifically, convenience sampling was used to select 160 respondents, ensuring that data collection was practical and efficient while capturing relevant

consumer insights (Sugiyono, 2017). The sample size was determined based on the rule of thumb that suggested a minimum of five to ten times the number of indicators used in the research model (M Hair J.F. & Sarstedt, 2017). Ensuring sample diversity was a priority to enhance the generalizability of the findings.

Data analysis was conducted using PLS-SEM with SmartPLS 3.0 software. The analysis followed a two-stage approach:

Measurement Model Evaluation

- Convergent validity: Assessed using factor loadings (>0.70), composite reliability (CR >0.70), and Average Variance Extracted (AVE >0.50) (Ghozali, 2014).
- Discriminant validity: Evaluated using the Fornell-Larcker criterion and cross-loadings (M Hair J.F. & Sarstedt, 2017).
- Reliability testing: Ensured through Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability scores exceeding 0.70.

Structural Model Evaluation

- Path coefficients: Examined to determine the strength and significance of relationships between variables.
- R-square values: Used to assess the explanatory power of the independent variables.
- Predictive relevance (Q-square): Tested using the Stone-Geisser criterion (Ghozali, 2014).
- Effect size (f-square): Assessed to determine the magnitude of the independent variables on dependent variables.

Multicollinearity Testing

- Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) scores were calculated to check for multicollinearity, ensuring that predictor variables were not highly correlated (M Hair J.F. & Sarstedt, 2017).

Mediation Analysis

- Using bootstrapping methods to determine indirect effects, brand image was analyzed as a mediating variable (Preacher & Hayes, 2008).

This research adhered to ethical guidelines by ensuring voluntary participation, informed consent, and respondent anonymity. Participants were informed about the study's objectives and assured that their responses would be kept confidential and used solely for academic purposes. No personally identifiable information was collected, and respondents were allowed to withdraw from the study at any time. The study also followed institutional ethical review board recommendations to uphold integrity and protect participants.

While this study offered significant insights, it was subject to several limitations. First, convenience sampling might limit the generalizability of the findings. Future studies could employ probability sampling techniques to enhance representativeness. Second, this study focused exclusively on Samsung smartphones; future research could compare multiple brands to provide broader industry insights. Third, while self-reported data provided valuable consumer perspectives, combining this with actual behavioral data, such as purchase history, could strengthen the robustness of future analyses. Additionally, longitudinal studies could examine how perceptions of product quality and online customer reviews evolve.

The methodology employed in this study ensures a systematic and rigorous approach to investigating the impact of product quality and online customer reviews on purchase decisions. By utilizing PLS-SEM, this research provides valuable insights into the mediating role of brand image and contributes to digital consumer behavior research. The comprehensive analysis techniques employed enhance the reliability and validity of the findings, making them valuable for academics and practitioners alike. Future research should explore alternative methodologies and expanded sample scopes to enrich further the understanding of digital marketing dynamics in the e-commerce sector.

This study analyzes consumer behavior in purchasing Samsung smartphones on the Shopee marketplace by considering various factors such as user demographics, purchase motivations, product quality, customer reviews, and brand image. The findings indicate that most Samsung users on Shopee belong to the 20-35 age group, making them a key segment in the technology and e-commerce market. Additionally, competitive pricing is a primary factor driving purchases on Shopee, primarily through discount programs,

installment plans, and cashback offers, which attract consumers from various economic backgrounds. Based on these considerations, the following hypotheses can be formulated based on the proposed framework. First, product quality is expected to influence purchasing decisions (H1) positively. Similarly, online customer reviews are anticipated to positively impact purchasing decisions (H2) positively. Additionally, brand image is hypothesized to be crucial in shaping purchasing decisions (H3). Furthermore, product quality is expected to enhance brand image, indicating a positive relationship between the two (H4). Lastly, online customer reviews are proposed to influence brand image (H5) positively.

A strong brand image, in turn, reinforces consumer trust and enhances the likelihood of purchase, as shown in Figure 1. The conceptual framework illustrated above demonstrates the theoretical relationship among the study variables, highlighting the direct and indirect effects of Product Quality (X1) and Online Customer Review (X2) on Purchase Decision (Y), with Brand Image (Z) acting as a mediating variable. This framework is grounded in consumer behavior and marketing theories, where product quality and electronic word-of-mouth are acknowledged as critical antecedents of brand perception. The diagram illustrates five hypotheses: H1 posits a direct effect of product quality on purchasing decisions, while H2 and H3 suggest that product quality and online customer reviews significantly influence brand image. It reflects the assumption that positive evaluations of product attributes and peer feedback can strengthen brand perception.

Furthermore, H4 hypothesizes that online customer reviews also directly impact purchasing decisions, independent of brand image. Meanwhile, H5 proposes that brand image mediates the influence of the two independent variables on the dependent variable, suggesting that a strong brand image could reinforce the likelihood of consumer purchases. The dual-path model, combining direct and mediated effects, allows the study to evaluate whether the influence of product quality and reviews is exerted solely through brand image or whether these factors can also independently drive purchase decisions. This integrative framework provides a structured lens for understanding how digital consumer interactions and product experiences translate into actual marketplace behavior, particularly in e-commerce environments like Shopee.

RESULTS

Regarding respondents' characteristics, this study involved 160 respondents who had purchased Samsung smartphones on Shopee. The data revealed that 61% of respondents were male, while 39% were female, suggesting that Samsung smartphones were slightly more popular among men. Regarding age distribution, most respondents (54.4%) were above 30 years old, followed by 30% in the 26-30 age group, 13.1% aged 21-25 years, and 2.5% under 21 years old. It indicates that most Samsung buyers on Shopee are adult consumers with more stable purchasing power. Additionally, the majority of respondents earned a monthly income between IDR 4-5 million (49%), followed by IDR 6-7 million (40%), and above IDR 8 million (11%), demonstrating that Samsung successfully appeals to the middle-to-upper income segment. The details are shown in Table 2.

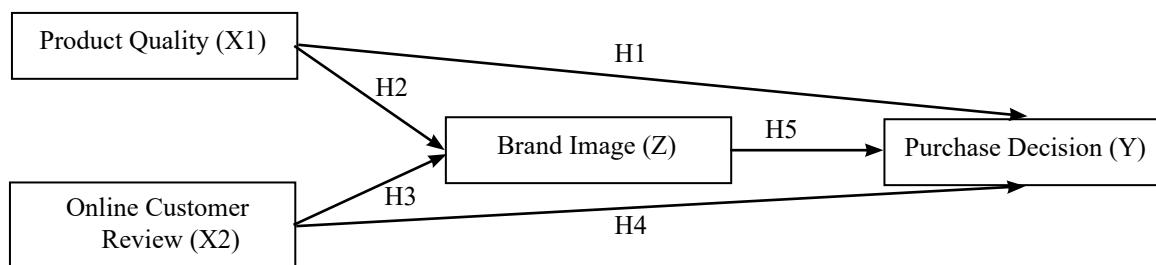


Figure 1. The conceptual framework

Table 2. Respondents' action control variables data (N=160)

Variables	Scale	Sample	Percentage
Gender			
Male	1	97	61.0
Female	0	63	39.0
Age (years old)			
21 and under	1	4	2.5
21 – 25	2	21	13.1
26 – 30	3	48	30.0
31 – 35	4	40	25.0
> 35	5	47	29.4
Education			
Junior high school	1	20	12.5
High school	2	105	65.6
Academy/University	3	35	21.9
Income			
< IDR 4 million	1	28	18.0
IDR 4 - 5 million	2	50	31.0
IDR 6 - 8 million	3	64	40.0
> IDR 8 million	4	18	11.0

Analysis of Key Variables

Purchase decision is the primary variable in this study. It is measured based on factors like ease of finding products on Shopee, trust in the brand, and product authenticity guarantees. The analysis results indicate that consumers feel more comfortable purchasing Samsung smartphones on Shopee due to warranty guarantees and a strong brand reputation. The highest-rated statement in the questionnaire is "If I need a smartphone, I will buy a Samsung on Shopee", with an average score of 4.034, highlighting a high level of loyalty toward the Samsung brand on this marketplace.

Regarding product quality, most respondents stated that they believe Samsung smartphones are durable and high-performing while meeting industry quality standards. One of the most positively rated aspects of the product is quality control and safety compliance, as reflected in the highest-scoring statement "Samsung always checks product expiration dates before selling", with an average score of 3.955. This suggests that a positive perception of product quality is crucial in purchase decisions.

Meanwhile, customer reviews are identified as among the most influential factors in purchasing decisions. Respondents reported that reviews from other buyers are highly useful in evaluating product strengths and

weaknesses. The statement "I find it very easy to rely on customer reviews when making a purchase decision" receives the highest average score of 4.023, indicating that most buyers heavily rely on customer reviews before purchasing products on Shopee.

Furthermore, brand image holds a crucial role in influencing consumer purchasing decisions. The analysis findings indicate that consumers perceive Samsung as a well-established and reputable brand, as evidenced by the statement, "Samsung smartphones on Shopee leave a positive impression on consumers," which receives an average score of 3.898. This suggests that Samsung's strong brand presence fosters positive consumer perceptions, contributing to increased trust in the brand. A favorable brand image enhances consumer confidence in product quality and strengthens long-term brand loyalty, ultimately encouraging repeat purchases and sustained customer engagement within the e-commerce marketplace.

Statistical Analysis (PLS-SEM Results)

In advancing from the general statistical analysis to the assessment of construct validity, it is essential to examine the reliability and consistency of the measurement model prior to interpreting structural relationships. While the PLS-SEM results provide insights into the strength and direction of hypothesized paths, the robustness of these

findings depends on the adequacy of the measurement indicators in capturing their respective latent variables. Therefore, the following analysis stage evaluates the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for each construct to determine convergent validity, ensuring that the observed indicators explain a substantial portion of the variance of their underlying latent constructs. This step is critical for confirming that the model demonstrates statistical significance at the structural level and meets the psychometric standards required for construct validity.

Test Results Average Variance Extracted

Table 3 shows that the square root of the average variance extracted (AVE) for each construct exceeds the correlation between any two constructs within the model. This result demonstrates that each construct shares more variance with its own indicators than with other constructs, thereby confirming the discriminant validity of the measurement model. Consequently, the estimated model's constructs meet the established discriminant validity criteria. Furthermore, since the AVE values exceed 0.500, it confirms that the constructs are valid in measuring their respective latent variables.

Testing the inner model involves creating a conceptually and theoretically grounded model, designed to assess the relationships between exogenous (independent) and endogenous (dependent) variables as defined in the conceptual framework.

Evaluating the structural model (inner model) consists of several key steps, one of the most important being examining the R-squared value. The R-squared value measures the model's goodness of fit, indicating how well the model explains the variance in the dependent variables. A higher R-squared value suggests that the

model effectively captures the relationships between variables. A lower value may indicate the need for model refinement or reconsideration of the theoretical assumptions.

The influence model exogenous latent variable (quality products and online customer reviews) regarding purchase decision gives an R-square value of 0.950 and 0.922, which indicates that the variability can interpret construct quality products and online customer reviews by 9.5 % and 9.2%. In comparison, 0.5 % is influenced by factors beyond the variables examined in this study.

The estimated values for the relationships between variables in the structural model must be statistically significant to validate the model. The bootstrapping procedure is typically employed to assess the significance of the hypotheses, which allows for estimating the sampling distribution of the parameter estimates. The significance of a hypothesis can be determined by examining the values of the parameter coefficients and the T-statistic significance, which are provided in the bootstrapping algorithm's report. The next step in evaluating significance involves comparing the T-statistic value to a critical value obtained from the T-table, typically at an alpha level of 0.05 (5%). The critical value at this level is 1.96, which means that if the T-statistic exceeds 1.96, the hypothesis is deemed statistically significant. This comparison between the T-table value and the T-statistic helps to assess the reliability of the estimated relationships within the structural model. If the T-statistic exceeds the critical value, it indicates sufficient evidence to support the hypothesis. Conversely, if the T-statistic is below the critical value, the hypothesis is not considered significant, and further model adjustments may be necessary.

Table 3. Test Results Average Variance Extracted (AVE)

Variables	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)	Information
Buying decision	0.581	Valid
Quality Product	0.562	Valid
Online Customer Reviews	0.683	Valid
Brand Image	0.584	Valid

Table 4. Endogenous Variable Value R²

Endogenous Variables	R square
Purchase Decision (Y)	0.950
Brand Image (Z)	0.922

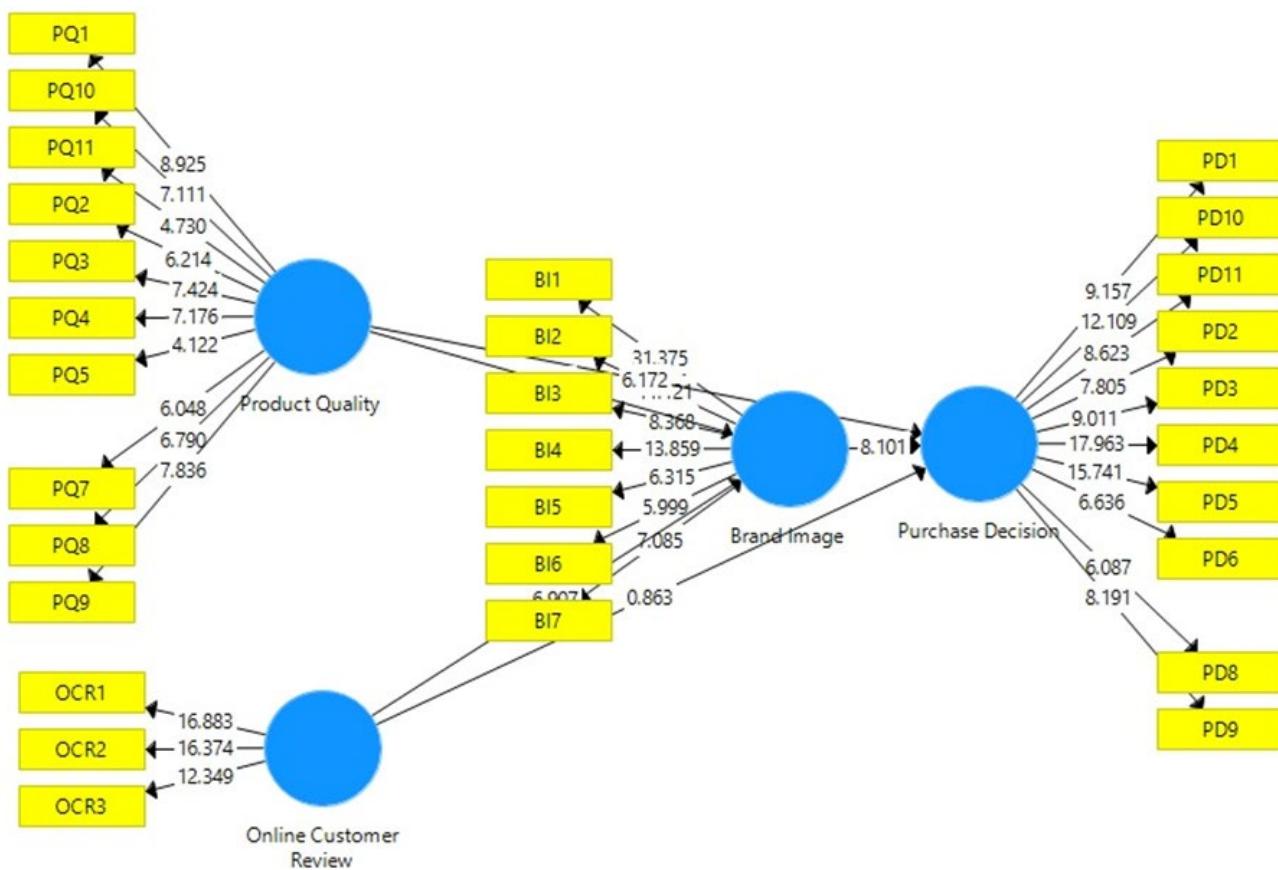


Figure 2. Bootstrapping test results

Hypothesis Testing Results

The Impact of Brand Image on Purchase Decisions

The hypothesis test results indicate a T-Statistic value of 7.891, an original sample value of 0.540, and a P-Value of 0.000 (Table 5). Consequently, the third hypothesis is supported, demonstrating that brand image positively and significantly impacts purchasing decisions. This finding is supported by research conducted by Bambang Somantri (Somantri et al. 2020), which stated that brand image positively and significantly impacts purchasing decisions. Similarly, studies by Widodo and Rimiyati (2023) and Utomo (2025) also confirmed that brand image significantly affects purchasing decisions (Rimiyati & Widodo, 2014; Utomo et al. 2025).

The Impact of Product Quality on Brand Image

The hypothesis test results (T-statistics = 9.341, original sample = 0.581, P-value = 0.000) (Table 5) confirm that product quality significantly and positively influences brand image, aligning with prior studies by Adawiyah et al. (2023) and Gircela & Wati (2021). This relationship is reinforced by Sah et al. (2025), who demonstrated

that high-quality offerings within circular economy frameworks enhance customer satisfaction, strengthen brand image, and ultimately increase brand value through mediated effects of loyalty and satisfaction. Together, these findings highlight that consistently delivering superior product or service quality shapes positive brand perceptions and is a strategic lever for building long-term consumer trust and competitive advantage in conventional and sustainability-driven markets. (Adawiyah & Yani, 2023; Gircela & Wati, 2020; Kuswibowo, 2022; Sah et al. 2025).

The Impact of Product Quality on Purchase Decisions

offering robust statistical evidence in favor of the first hypothesis. The T-statistic substantially exceeds the critical threshold, while the P-value is well below the conventional 0.05 significance level, indicating that the relationship between product quality and purchasing decisions is positive and statistically significant. This suggests that higher product quality substantially enhances the likelihood of purchase, underscoring its critical role in shaping consumer buying behavior. These findings align with prior studies by Setia (2020), Aropah et al. (2022) and Rimiyati and Widodo (2014),

all of which confirmed the positive influence of product quality on purchasing decisions (Aropah et al. 2022; Rimiyati & Widodo, 2014; Setia, 2020). Furthermore, international evidence by Malheiros (2025) reinforces this conclusion, showing that superior product quality significantly boosts perceived value and purchase intention in competitive markets (Malheiros et al. 2025).

The Impact of Online Customer Reviews on Brand Image

The hypothesis testing results indicate a T-statistic of 6.851, an original sample value of 0.409, and a P-value of 0.000 (Table 5), thereby supporting the acceptance of the fifth hypothesis. These findings confirm that online customer reviews positively and statistically significantly influence brand image. This conclusion aligns with the work of Ali et al. (2021), who reported that online consumer reviews have a substantial and favorable effect on brand image (Ali et al. 2021). Similarly, Prakoso and Rusdianti (2023) and Kirilenko (2024) demonstrated that an increase in positive online customer reviews strengthens the brand image formed in consumers' perceptions (Kirilenko et al. 2024; Prakoso & Rusdianto, 2023). Moreover, a study by Zhang (2024) from 60,000 JD smartphone reviews using NLP and a TRA-based survey found that product attributes, service quality, brand image, and price significantly influence repurchase intention, with service quality having the most substantial impact (J. Zhang et al. 2024).

The Impact of Online Customer Reviews on Purchase Decisions

indicating that the second hypothesis is unsupported. The T-statistic falls below the critical threshold, and the P-value exceeds the conventional 0.05 significance level. It suggests that online customer reviews do not exert a statistically significant effect on purchasing decisions in this study's context. This finding implies that positive reviews alone have not been sufficient to influence other consumers' purchasing choices, as additional factors may play a more decisive role (Amalia, 2024). These results contrast with prior research by Dwipa Premesti and Aminah (2023), which found that online customer ratings significantly affect purchasing decisions on Lazada (Dwipa Premesti & Aminah, 2023). This is also in line with Larfi (2025) and Gong (2025), which asserts that online customer reviews and brand loyalty generally shape consumer perceptions, trust, and confidence toward a product, the discrepancy highlights the potential moderating role of contextual factors such as platform characteristics, product type, or consumer demographics in determining the strength of this relationship (Gong & Seo, 2025; Larfi et al. 2025).

Managerial Implications

The managerial implications of this research provide valuable insights for businesses, particularly for companies operating in the e-commerce sector, such as Samsung and Shopee. First, the study highlights the critical role of product quality in influencing consumer purchase decisions.

Table 5. Hypothesis Testing Results

Variables	Original Sample	Sample Mean	Standard Deviation	T- Statistics	P Values
Brand Image → Purchase Decision	0.549	0.553	0.070	7.891	0.000
Product Quality → Brand Image	0.581	0.585	0.062	9.341	0.000
Product Quality → Purchase Decision	0.395	0.386	0.065	6.045	0.000
Online Customer Review → Brand Image	0.413	0.409	0.060	6.851	0.000
Online Customer Review → Purchase Decision	0.050	0.055	0.057	0.872	0.384

Managers should prioritize continuous product innovation, focusing on durability, reliability, and design improvements to meet consumer expectations. Investing in quality assurance and customer satisfaction programs will enhance brand perception and foster long-term consumer loyalty (Cho, 2020). Additionally, companies should actively monitor consumer feedback and adjust product development strategies accordingly to align with market demands (Y. Zhang et al. 2025).

Second, online customer reviews have emerged as a significant determinant of consumer purchasing behavior. E-commerce managers should focus on encouraging positive reviews and managing negative feedback effectively. Implementing a strategy to engage with customer reviews, respond to complaints, and leverage user-generated content can enhance credibility and trust. Moreover, brands can collaborate with influencers or verified buyers to generate authentic and high-quality reviews, significantly impacting consumer trust and conversion rates. By integrating these managerial strategies, companies can strengthen their competitive position in the digital marketplace and optimize their online sales performance.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

The conclusions of this research highlight the critical influence of product quality and online customer reviews on consumer purchasing decisions, with brand image serving as a significant mediating factor. The findings indicate that higher product quality enhances consumer trust and brand perception, increasing purchase intent. Furthermore, positive online customer reviews contribute significantly to shaping consumer attitudes, reinforcing product credibility and influencing decision-making in the digital marketplace. The study confirms that companies like Samsung, operating in e-commerce platforms such as Shopee, must prioritize product quality improvements and actively manage online customer feedback to maintain a competitive advantage.

Moreover, the study highlights the crucial role of brand image as an intervening variable, showing that poor brand perception can limit purchase decisions even with strong product quality and positive reviews. It underscores the need for strategic branding, customer

engagement, and digital marketing to strengthen brand equity. Additionally, leveraging data analytics to track consumer sentiment is recommended. At the same time, future research should explore cross-brand comparisons and longitudinal analyses to capture the long-term effects of product quality and online reviews on consumer behavior in e-commerce.

A notable difference between the present study and prior research lies in the insignificant direct effect of online customer reviews on purchase decisions, despite their significant impact on brand image. While previous studies, such as Dwipa Premesti and Aminah (2023) and Ali et al. (2021), reported that positive online reviews directly enhance purchase intention by increasing consumer trust and perceived value, our findings suggest that, in the Shopee–Samsung smartphone context, reviews alone are insufficient to trigger purchase behavior without the reinforcement of a strong brand image. Unlike Zhang et al. (2024), who found that service quality and product attributes directly influenced repurchase intentions in China's e-commerce market, this study shows that online reviews in the Samsung–Shopee context mainly strengthen brand perception rather than directly driving purchases. This divergence may stem from contextual factors such as product category, platform credibility, and consumer demographics, highlighting the pivotal mediating role of brand image. (Ali et al. 2021; Devedi et al. 2017; Dwipa Premesti & Aminah, 2023; J. Zhang et al. 2024).

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this research, several recommendations can be proposed to businesses, particularly those operating in e-commerce, to enhance their competitive advantage and optimize sales performance.

First, companies should prioritize product quality improvements, a key driver of consumer purchasing decisions. Samsung and other smartphone manufacturers must continue investing in R&D, quality control, and innovation to ensure their products meet or exceed consumer expectations. Enhancing battery life, camera performance, and processing speed can strengthen brand loyalty and encourage repeat purchases. Additionally, businesses should establish post-purchase support systems, such as warranty services and customer assistance, to reinforce trust and satisfaction.

Second, managing online customer reviews effectively is crucial for influencing potential buyers. E-commerce brands should implement review management strategies, encouraging satisfied customers to leave positive reviews while addressing negative feedback professionally and transparently. Providing incentives such as discounts or loyalty points for verified reviews can help increase engagement. Additionally, integrating AI-driven sentiment analysis tools can help companies monitor consumer feedback and adjust marketing strategies accordingly.

Third, brand image must be strategically developed and maintained to ensure long-term success in the digital marketplace. Companies should invest in brand-building campaigns, leveraging social media, influencer marketing, and digital advertisements to enhance brand perception. Collaborating with key opinion leaders (KOLs) and ensuring consistent branding across platforms will strengthen consumer trust and association with product quality.

Lastly, future research should explore comparative studies across different e-commerce platforms and include a larger sample size to enhance generalizability. Businesses should also consider using big data analytics to predict consumer trends and optimise personalised marketing efforts. By implementing these recommendations, companies can maximize their market presence, boost consumer engagement, and sustain long-term profitability in the highly competitive e-commerce industry.

FUNDING STATEMENT: This research did not receive any specific grant from funding agencies in the public, commercial, or not - for - profit sectors.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST: The author declares no conflict of interest.

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