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# Examining E-Commerce Shopping Behavior: Investigating the Influence of Customer Decision-Making

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## Abstract

*This qualitative study investigates the complex dynamics of consumer shopping behaviors on e-commerce platforms, with a particular focus on the significant changes brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic. Conducted from June to August 2023, the research engaged 16 key informants from Indonesia's leading e-commerce sector through semi-structured interviews and direct observations to gather a rich diversity of insights. This methodological approach allowed for an in-depth exploration of how shopping habits have evolved before, during, and after the pandemic, alongside the various factors influencing online purchase decisions and how these shifts have affected consumer preferences and the functionalities of e-commerce platforms. Through thematic analysis, the study unveiled six key themes: Consumer Data Management and Analysis, Changing Consumer Behavior, Technology and Innovation, Market and Competition Dynamics, Consumer Trust and Security, and Strategic Marketing and Branding. These themes highlight the critical role of big data and artificial intelligence in adapting to consumer behavior changes, a shift towards prioritizing service quality and personalization, and the rapid move towards digital, health-conscious, and convenience-driven consumer preferences catalyzed by the pandemic. Furthermore, the findings underscore the importance of agile and adaptive marketing strategies in an omni-channel setup and the pivotal role of trust and security in e-commerce. This research offers a nuanced perspective on the pandemic-induced shifts in online shopping behavior, providing a comprehensive framework for understanding these changes and actionable insights for practitioners to develop tailored product offerings, enhance customer service, and refine marketing strategies to meet evolving consumer needs effectively.*

**Keywords:** *Consumer Shopping Behavior, E-commerce Platforms, COVID-19 Pandemic Impact, Strategic Marketing and Branding, Online Purchase Decisions*

## 1. Introduction

In the wake of the swift evolution of Web 2.0, the landscape of modern life has been significantly shaped by the prominence of online shopping (Bacay et al., 2022). The advent of Business-to-Consumer (B2C) electronic commerce (e-commerce) has empowered consumers to directly access and acquire goods and services from online retailers through the vast expanse of the Internet (Yasin et al., 2023). Within the Business-to-Consumer (B2C) e-commerce cycle, consumers engage with the Internet for diverse purposes, including product feature searches, price and review comparisons, product and service selection, order placement, online

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payments, and subsequent product delivery, followed by post-sales services through the Internet or other channels (Sinha, 2010). The transformative impact of e-commerce technologies extends to aiding companies in broadening their marketplace, connecting with a larger customer base and identifying optimal suppliers and business partners on both national and international scales with speed and cost-effectiveness (Chaffey, 2022). The surge in E-shopping retailers over the past two decades serves as a clear indication that, moving forward, retailers are increasingly likely to rely on this mode of shopping (Saribut, 2022).

The profound impact of the COVID-19 pandemic resonates across multiple aspects of society, with a particularly transformative effect on the e-commerce industry. The pandemic, coupled with subsequent social distancing measures, has not only reshaped the habits and lifestyle of the population but has also accelerated the digitization of the economy and society at large (Itani & Hollebeek, 2020; Kol et al., 2022). A striking phenomenon during the pandemic was the widespread adoption of online shopping, in-store payment alternatives, and contactless payment methods, marking a paradigm shift for many consumers who explored these avenues for the first time (Morales, 2021; Prasetya et al., 2022). E-commerce, emerging as a dominant force during the pandemic, witnessed a concerted effort from retailers who invested substantial resources to build, enhance, and promote their online stores (N. Chen & Yang, 2023; Saribut, 2022). The rapid surge of e-commerce has been a catalyst in fundamentally altering consumer shopping behaviors, heralding a reshaped future for the retail industry. E-commerce platforms, positioned as a secure refuge from the risks posed by the pandemic, prompted a substantial 46% shift in purchasing preferences toward online sites during the crisis (Shiu et al., 2023).

A report from Singapore-based institutions unveiled that half of Indonesia's population engages in online shopping, contributing significantly to the digital economy, with 72% of its value originating from the robust e-commerce sector (Kaplan et al., 2022a, 2022b). The momentum in Indonesia's online shopping landscape was further accentuated by a consulting firm's findings, revealing a surge in online shoppers from 75 million pre-COVID to 85 million during the pandemic. McKinsey's survey, conducted both during and post-pandemic, underscored the transformation of consumer behavior, with 87% of Indonesians adopting new shopping habits such as increased online shopping and a surge in digital banking usage (Das & Ramalingam, 2022). However, a recent survey by Katadata (2023) indicated a post-pandemic decline in e-commerce customer visits in Indonesia, coinciding with a decrease in national e-commerce transactions that fell short of the Bank of Indonesia's target, reaching only 476.3 million Rupiahs instead of the projected 489 million. This trend suggested a notable shift towards conventional offline shopping methods among certain individuals (Katadata, 2023). Interestingly, this trend was not exclusive to Indonesia, as evidenced by Amazon's third-quarter 2022 decline in net transactions (Annur & Katadata, 2022b). Despite these shifts, Google's predictions remain optimistic, suggesting continued growth in Indonesia's e-commerce sector until 2025 (Annur & Katadata, 2022a). This optimism aligns with the broader trajectory of Indonesia's digital economy, where e-commerce is anticipated to play a pivotal and enduring role in its continued expansion (Ahdiat & Katadata, 2022).

The existing body of literature has emphasized the significance of e-commerce platforms that facilitate virtual interactions and provide comprehensive product information as potential economic benefits for customers (Chandna & Salimath, 2018; Li et al., 2018; Zhang et al., 2017). Analyzing millions of in-store and online shopping experiences over the 14 four-week intervals since the onset of COVID-19, researchers aimed to identify product categories exhibiting consistent increases in purchases, offering insights into anticipated growth patterns

(NielsenIQ, 2021). Despite the common knowledge of online shopping, the objective of these studies is to forecast sales trends during pandemic and post-pandemic periods, considering the impact of marketing and advertising strategies, government policies, and natural disasters like COVID.

Despite the acknowledged transformative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on e-commerce, a significant research gap exists in analyzing customer decision-making patterns through the evolving phases of the pandemic. The literature has yet to systematically explore how consumer behaviors have transitioned from the predominance of in-person shopping pre-pandemic, through the pivot to online platforms due to pandemic-induced restrictions, to a potential re-emergence of pre-pandemic shopping habits as restrictions ease. This dynamic shift, influenced by a complex interplay of marketing and advertising strategies, government policies, natural disasters, and evolving consumer habits, remains largely unexamined. Addressing this gap is imperative for a nuanced understanding of shifts in e-commerce consumer behavior, offering critical insights for businesses and policymakers to develop informed strategies and policies tailored to the post-pandemic e-commerce landscape. Consequently, this paper aims to map the landscape of consumer shopping behavior across the pre, during, and post-pandemic periods, including behavioral segmentation and commodity consumption patterns. Furthermore, it endeavors to uncover the multifaceted factors driving changes in e-commerce purchase behaviors and to construct a comprehensive research model that encapsulates these behavioral shifts, thereby equipping stakeholders with the knowledge to navigate the e-commerce domain effectively in the aftermath of the pandemic.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1. E-Commerce in Indonesia**

Online commerce has a profound socioeconomic impact on Indonesia (Davy & Borycki, 2022), yielding substantial financial benefits, job creation for micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs), and providing buyers with savings of up to 25%. From 2017 to 2022, 30% of e-commerce transactions addressed previously unfulfilled needs, contributing to a more than 200% increase in online commerce usage among Indonesian citizens over the last five years.

Online commerce encompasses two primary platforms: e-tailing and social commerce (Hariandi et al., 2019). E-tailing involves the buying and selling of physical goods through online platforms facilitating transactions, with notable examples in Indonesia being Bukalapak, Blibli, JD.ID, Lazada, Shopee, and Tokopedia. Additionally, brand players like Ace Hardware and Gramedia operate as e-tailers. Social commerce, on the other hand, centers around informal markets that encourage buying and selling through social media and messaging platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, and Line. Notably, these social media platforms have developed their own marketplaces, including TikTok Shop, Facebook Marketplace, and Instagram Shop.

The Indonesian e-commerce industry has rapidly evolved over the past 15 years. In the 2010s, homegrown platforms like Bukalapak and Tokopedia emerged, becoming two of Indonesia's four startup unicorns by 2017, each valued at over 1 billion USD. According to Startup rankings in 2019, six of the top ten startups were e-commerce, including Bukalapak, Blibli, Traveloka, Zalora Indonesia, Blanja.com, and Elevenia, determined by their influence on SR Web and social media (Katadata, 2019). In 2018, marked by festivals, discounts, and cashbacks, became

a pivotal period for online shopping, intensifying e-commerce competition (Katadata, 2018). By 2021, Indonesia led globally in e-commerce adoption, with 88.1% of the population utilizing e-commerce services, surpassing the United Kingdom and The Philippines at 86.9% and 86.2%, respectively, showcasing widespread familiarity and fostering the digital economy through e-commerce usage (Lidwina & Katadata, 2021).

## **2.2. Consumer Behavior Theories**

The theory of consumer behavior encompasses various perspectives and models that seek to understand and predict consumer actions. Some of the prominent theories and models include the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA), the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), and the Integrated Behavioral Model (IBM) (De Jong et al., 2015; Farronato et al., 2022). The Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) emphasizes the role of an individual's beliefs in predicting their behavior. It posits that an individual's attitude toward a behavior and subjective norms (social pressures to perform or not perform the behavior) together shape their behavioral intentions, which in turn influence their actual behavior. This theory suggests that if a person believes that a particular behavior is positive and perceives that important others also view it favorably, they are more likely to engage in that behavior. The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) extends TRA by incorporating the concept of perceived behavioral control (Elaziz & Kurt, 2017; Li et al., 2022). This addition reflects the idea that an individual's perception of the ease or difficulty of performing a particular behavior can significantly influence their behavioral intentions and actual behavior. TPB has been widely used to understand and predict a variety of consumer behaviors, including environmentally sustainable consumption. Further expanding on these concepts, the Integrated Behavioral Model (IBM) includes additional factors such as habit and past behavior. IBM proposes that behavior is not only influenced by behavioral intentions but also by environmental and personal factors. This model has been applied in various contexts to study consumer behaviors, particularly in health-related decisions and environmental sustainability. In summary, consumer behavior theories such as TRA, TPB, and IBM provide comprehensive frameworks for understanding the multitude of factors that influence consumer decision-making and behavior. These theories have been extensively utilized in both research and marketing to predict and influence consumer actions, offering valuable insights into the complex nature of consumer behavior.

## **3. Research Design**

### **3.1. Data Collection**

Utilizing a qualitative approach, this study conducted semi-structured interviews with key informants involved in the e-commerce industry, coupled with direct observations (RK Yin, 2003). The goal is to comprehensively understand the factors influencing shopping behavior on e-commerce platforms. The semi-structured interview method blends predetermined questions with flexibility to explore emergent themes. Data collection occurred from June to August 2023, ensuring a diverse temporal context. Interviews, lasting approximately 45 minutes, were audio recorded with participant consent for accurate transcription. The interview guide, aligned with research objectives and literature review, is designed before obtaining informed consent from participants. The guide explores topics like changing shopping behavior, factors influencing decisions, and pandemic impacts. The interview questions are as follows:

- How has your shopping behavior on e-commerce platforms changed prior to, during, and

post-pandemic?

- What factors influenced your decision to purchase products or services on e-commerce platforms?
- How did the pandemic impact your shopping preferences and habits?
- Have you noticed any changes in the availability of products, delivery options, or customer service on e-commerce platforms?
- How do you perceive the trustworthiness and security of e-commerce platforms, especially in relation to the pandemic?
- Did you experiment with new online shopping platforms or features during the pandemic? If yes, what motivated you to try them?
- What role did online reviews, recommendations, or social media influencers play in your purchasing decisions?
- How do you evaluate the overall customer experience when shopping on e-commerce platforms?
- Have you encountered any challenges or frustrations while shopping on e-commerce platforms? How did you overcome them?
- What improvements or changes would you like to see in e-commerce platforms to enhance your shopping experience?

Moreover, this study also performed direct observation of participants' behavior and interactions on e-commerce platforms. Researchers observe and document participants' browsing patterns, navigation choices, clicks, and other actions performed while shopping online. This type of data helps researchers understand the actual behaviors and decision-making cues participants exhibit during their shopping experiences.

### **3.2. Sample**

In Indonesia, the e-commerce landscape is primarily shaped by five prominent platforms: Shopee, Tokopedia, Bukalapak, Lazada, and Blibli. In this specific research endeavor, our focus is directed toward XYZ company, one of these leading e-commerce platforms. To ensure the acquisition of profound and comprehensive insights, we have meticulously selected key informants who boast substantial expertise within the e-commerce industry, particularly with regard to comprehending the intricate dynamics of customer decision-making processes. Our cohort of interview participants encompasses a diverse spectrum of viewpoints and experiences within this domain, including e-commerce platform managers, marketing professionals, and seasoned online shoppers. In total, we have conducted interviews with 16 participants.

In the realm of qualitative research, the emphasis is placed on the richness and depth of gathered information rather than being exclusively tethered to sample size, thereby diminishing the latter's criticality for research significance (Leech and Onwuegbuzie, 2007). Additionally, according to Francis et al. (2010), a minimum sample size of 13 is recommended for theory-based interview studies, a threshold that our study comfortably surpasses. Consequently, we are confident that our research benefits from a sufficiently robust and diverse set of interviewees, thereby enabling us to glean comprehensive insights into the intricacies of e-commerce operations and customer decision-making processes within the Indonesian market.

### **3.3. Data Analysis**

The principal analytical approach employed for the processed transcribed data in this study was thematic analysis. This qualitative research method is primarily oriented towards the identification, scrutiny, and interpretation of patterns of significance or themes that emerge

within qualitative data. Thematic analysis is particularly well-suited for investigating inquiries related to the lived experiences, perspectives, behaviors, and practices of research participants, as well as examining the social construction of meaning and the portrayal of societal phenomena. Notably, thematic analysis can be undertaken via either an inductive or deductive approach, encompassing a comprehensive six-step process: 1) immersion in the data, 2) establishment of codes, 3) generation of thematic constructs, 4) evaluation of thematic constructs, 5) definition and nomenclature of themes, and 6) production of the research report. This methodological choice is particularly advantageous when exploring subjective information, such as the experiences, viewpoints, and opinions of research subjects, and is conventionally applied to data sourced from interviews, dialogues, open-ended survey responses, and content from social media platforms. The selection of thematic analysis as the analytical framework is contingent upon the overarching research objectives and the methodological preferences of the researcher.

In accordance with the methodological guidelines presented by Maguire and Delahun (2017), the thematic analysis process in our study was rigorously executed in six distinct stages. Firstly, data familiarization entailed the comprehensive assimilation of the dataset, fostering an in-depth understanding. Subsequently, the creation of coding categories facilitated the systematic categorization of diverse data elements. Theme generation involved the identification of prominent thematic elements emerging from the dataset. The ensuing review of these themes ensured precision and reliability. Each theme was then meticulously labeled to impart clarity and distinctiveness. Lastly, exemplars were selectively identified to vividly illustrate each thematic construct, further enhancing the qualitative richness of the analysis.

The utilization of NVivo software was instrumental in enabling a systematic and comprehensive thematic analysis, particularly in the context of investigating shifts in e-commerce shopping behavior. This software's capabilities streamlined the orderly organization and classification of data, adhering to stringent data management protocols. Rigorous integrity checks and validation procedures were executed to verify the fidelity of transcriptions against the original audio recordings. Within NVivo, the data was methodically coded, allowing for the discernment of patterns, themes, and underlying concepts, thereby facilitating data organization and the extraction of meaningful insights. The software's inherent flexibility accommodated the ongoing development and refinement of codes throughout the analysis process. In adherence to ethical principles and privacy concerns, excerpts from the data were diligently anonymized or deidentified. This meticulous process entailed the removal or pseudonymization of personally identifiable information, thereby ensuring compliance with data protection regulations and the upholding of ethical research standards.

### **3.4. Validity and Reliability**

In qualitative research, particularly when data saturation is achieved, it's essential to establish validity and reliability to ensure the integrity and credibility of the findings. Data saturation, the point at which no new information or themes emerge from the data, signifies the depth and comprehensiveness of the research. To bolster validity, researchers can employ triangulation, using multiple data sources, methods, or theories to cross-verify findings, thus enhancing consistency and confirmation of results. Member checking, where participants review and validate the findings or interpretations, also plays a crucial role in establishing the accuracy and resonance of the research outcomes. Providing rich, thick descriptions of the context, participants, and settings enhances the transferability of the findings, allowing readers to gauge the applicability of the results to their contexts. Reflexivity is another critical aspect, where

researchers reflect on and document their biases, values, and experiences, and how these might influence the research process.

Regarding reliability, maintaining consistency in data collection is paramount. A clear, documented process for data collection ensures systematic and replicable procedures, strengthening the study's reliability. These measures collectively contribute to the robustness of qualitative research, ensuring that the findings are both credible and dependable, even when data saturation indicates a comprehensive coverage of the subject matter.

#### **4. Analysis of the Result**

A total of 17 participants from prominent e-commerce platforms were involved in the study, revealing key themes as displayed in Appendix 1. These themes were derived through a detailed thematic analysis conducted for each participant. Examples of the emerging themes from each participant are presented in Appendix 1, across columns P1 to P17. Following this analysis, a process of code saturation was undertaken to refine and consolidate these themes, which are documented in the "theme" column. These themes are vital for understanding the current dynamics of consumer behavior and business strategies in the digital era, drawing on established theories and recent research in the field.

The first theme "Consumer Data Management and Analysis", highlights how customers are expecting more and more customisation options and individualized online buying experiences . The need for customized goods and services has increased as a result of this trend (Smith, 2013), underscoring the need for big data in understanding and adapting to the shifting patterns of consumer behavior. This need has been made even more pressing by worldwide disruptions like the COVID-19 epidemic. The body of research continually emphasizes how important big data is for gaining understanding of customer behavior and enabling tactical changes, especially in the dynamic environment of e-commerce and changing customer demographics. Zhang and Tan (2020) for example, clarified how big data shapes consumers' decision-making processes by mediating external influences and influencing consumers' internal perceptions. Furthermore, the emergence of real-time data analytics serves as a dynamic counterpart to big data, proving vital for tracking and adjusting to quick changes in customer preferences, as indicated by the spike in online shopping and dependency on digital platforms. Precise and timely insights into consumer preferences can be derived from the integration of both internal and external real-time data, spanning from website traffic to consumer purchasing habits and competing pricing strategies (Simchi-Levi & Wu, 2018).

The process of analyzing customer behavior involves the systematic collection and interpretation of data to gain an understanding of how consumers interact with a company's offerings and marketing initiatives, alongside their preferences, habits, and requirements (Alves Gomes & Meisen, 2023; Hadhoud & Salameh, 2020; Martinez, 2022). This analysis is crucial not only for enhancing customer experiences but also for devising effective marketing strategies (Agarwal et al., 2022). By identifying segments with significant potential for product or service adoption or a propensity for repeat purchases, businesses can tailor their marketing strategies to these segments, thereby optimizing their return on investment (Agarwal et al., 2022). Additionally, customer behavior analysis can reveal opportunities for cross-selling or upselling, where businesses can offer supplementary products or services to existing customers, thus increasing revenue (Tomczyk et al., 2016).

Similarly, the theme "Technology and Innovation" emphasizes how important data analytics

and artificial intelligence (AI) are to understanding and predicting customer behavior. This is in line with the findings of Davenport and Ronanki's (2018) regarding the revolutionary impact of artificial intelligence in the business domain. According to the McKinsey Global Institute, the broad application of AI in a variety of industries is expected to boost marketing and sales by an additional \$2.6 trillion by 2020. This phenomena demonstrates the deep ways in which AI and data analytics are altering the commercial environment and customer relationships, hence illuminating Christensen's concept of disruptive innovation as stated in "The Innovator's Dilemma" (1997). In this context, AI and data analytics become vital for companies seeking a competitive edge by understanding market trends and consumer behavior (Ebrahimi, 2022; Essien, 2023; Gupta et al., 2023).

Furthermore, the wider range of technology advancements has a notable influence on the actions of consumers. Social media's widespread effect and the Internet's ubiquity have drastically changed how people obtain information, which has shaped their behavior (Lopez & Castaño, 2018). In example, social media platforms enable users to quickly learn about brands and items, which has a direct impact on their decision to buy (Tarnanidis et al., 2023). Businesses must adjust their digital strategy in light of this transformation in order to improve mobile engagement and manage the changing dynamics between online and offline retail environments. Furthermore, as technology has advanced, customer expectations for overall experience, service quality, and product quality have increased (Park & Koh, 2017). The integration of the Internet of Things (IoT) and AI into daily life is not only transforming how consumers interact with products and services but also heralds a future where consumer behavior is intricately linked with technological advancements. While these developments present opportunities to improve decision-making and satisfaction, they simultaneously introduce challenges related to privacy and data security (Bandara et al., 2020).

The "Changing Consumer Behavior" theme topic highlights a notable shift in consumer behavior towards online buying and digital solutions, based on insights from Solomon et al.'s "Consumer Behavior: Buying, Having, and Being" (2014). This change is ingrained in consumer psychology; consumers' priorities are being shaped by a greater emphasis on convenience and health, which points to a broader evolution in consumer values and decision-making processes (Leonov et al., 2023). Consumer behavior is changing from the traditional cognitive-based perspective of consumer actions to one that is more impacted by emotional variables, perceived value, and peer influence (Rajagopal et al., 2016). These changes represent a move away from traditional shopping habits towards preferences that are more digitally-oriented, health-conscious, and convenience-driven. The COVID-19 pandemic has notably accelerated these changes in consumer preferences, with individuals turning to digital platforms for contactless transactions, motivated by health considerations and the need for convenience (X. Wang et al., 2021). Furthermore, there is a rising demand for health-centric products, affecting in-store shopping behaviors (Agrawal et al., 2022). Notably, consumers are showing tendencies towards product substitution and impulsive buying (Lavuri et al., 2023). Studies examining the pandemic's effects have shown that retail consumer behavior has undergone both temporary and permanent changes worldwide (Gupta et al., 2023), suggesting that businesses must evolve to cater to these changing consumer needs. Moreover, the pandemic has amplified consumer consciousness regarding the environmental footprint of products, with a noticeable tilt among younger demographics towards organic products and quality (Sohn et al., 2022), indicating a broader shift in consumer priorities and values.

For "Market and Competition Dynamics" theme, the emphasis is placed on the swiftly



changing market environment, which resonates with the dynamic capabilities framework introduced by Teece et al. (1997). In order to stay ahead in a market that is changing quickly, this theme highlights how important it is for companies to be flexible and agile in their marketing strategies, especially when using omni-channel techniques (Eckstein et al., 2023; Palmatier et al., 2019). The importance of such adaptability has been further highlighted by the COVID-19 pandemic, which has had a broad impact on various aspects including market uncertainty, investor behavior, and the recovery paths of firms (C. Liu et al., 2023; Madaan & Chugh, 2021; L. Zhang et al., 2023). Due to the rapid pace of digitalization, the pandemic has accelerated the shift to a "winner takes most" situation, increasing market concentration and productivity gaps. Research indicates that businesses possessing inventive skills and a wide market penetration have exhibited greater resilience (Engelen et al., 2024), highlighting the need for flexibility and creativity in the wake of the pandemic. Businesses must embrace digital transformation and swiftly adjust to changing conditions in order to meet these problems (Khosrojerdi et al., 2023). In order to promote a robust, inclusive, and competitive economic environment after COVID-19, policymakers and stakeholders must collaborate simultaneously (Olayele, 2023).

The themes of "Consumer Trust and Security" and "Strategic Marketing and Branding" are increasingly vital in the modern business environment, each addressing crucial aspects of market engagement and consumer perception. In the world of e-commerce, consumer trust and security are underpinned by a variety of critical factors. Foremost among these is transaction security, which is crucial in establishing consumer confidence through secure payment processes (Harshita & Tanwar, 2017). Equally important is data privacy, which involves the protection of consumer data from unauthorized access and breaches (Mäki & Alamäki, 2019). Another important aspect that affects the development of trust is the veracity of the information offered on e-commerce platforms (C. T. Liu et al., 2023). Online purchasing propensity is positively correlated with consumers' general degree of trust (Oliveira et al., 2017). Building trust is critically dependent on customer pleasure, which is heavily impacted by the entire experience, including factors of data security and privacy (Kang & Hustvedt, 2014). The e-commerce site's reliability and reputation (Nguyen et al., 2023), reliable logistics for efficient delivery (X. Chen, 2017), and adherence to legal and regulatory standards (Chang et al., 2013), are additional aspects that contribute to this confidence. These components form an essential structure that e-commerce entities must establish and maintain to secure consumer trust, which is a crucial determinant of success in the digital market space.

Alongside, the "Strategic Marketing and Branding" theme stresses the need for businesses to be proactive and visionary in their marketing efforts. Drawing inspiration from the strategic market planning approach of Kotler and Keller in "Marketing Management" (2015), this theme highlights the necessity for businesses to not only understand but also anticipate consumer needs and market trends. In an era marked by rapid changes in consumer preferences and technological advancements, it is crucial for businesses to adapt their marketing strategies to stay relevant. Modern consumers, who are sensitive to prices and spoiled for choice, demand exceptional service quality, convenience, quick responses, and rapid market introductions (Kautish, 2016). Companies are encouraged to adopt a customer-centric and competitive approach by updating their marketing techniques and leveraging technological innovations (Santos & Sousa, 2022). The advent of new technologies has transformed marketing strategies, focusing on the application of cutting-edge technologies and data to forge more impactful marketing initiatives (Polat & Akgün, 2017). Strategies suited for tough and competitive markets involve creating customer value, fostering differentiation and innovation, enhancing

brand value, and concentrating on precise marketing communications (Nasir, 2018). This encompasses using data analytics to understand consumer behaviors (Yangzom & Ahuja, 2023) tapping into digital marketing channels for wider reach (Arbittier, 2023), and developing a strong brand identity that resonates with the target market (Muchenje et al., 2023). Companies need to be agile in their marketing approaches, continuously evolving to meet the demands of a dynamic global marketplace. By doing so, they can create a strong brand presence that not only attracts but also retains customers in a highly competitive environment.

Both themes highlight critical strategies for modern businesses: establishing trust and security as foundational elements of customer relationships in the digital age, and employing strategic, data-driven marketing and branding efforts to adapt to and anticipate market changes. Together, these approaches are key to achieving sustainable business success and customer loyalty in a rapidly evolving global marketplace. Together, these strategies present a multi-faceted view of the current state of business and consumer engagement, emphasizing the need for data-driven decision-making, technological integration, and consumer-centric approaches in navigating the complexities of the digital business environment.

In summary, this research has identified themes that comprehensively cover various critical dimensions of the modern business landscape. These themes, detailed in Table 2, reflect the complex interaction among consumer behavior, market dynamics, technological progress, and strategic marketing practices. They are crucial in comprehending how businesses are adjusting to the changing needs and expectations of consumers in a progressively digitalized world.

Theme	Phrase	Definition
Consumer Data Management and Analysis	Understanding consumer behavior, adapting media strategies, technology role, social media trends, digital data	Focus on analyzing consumer data to predict trends, shifting from price to service quality and personalization.
Business Ecosystem and Integration	E-commerce adaptability, online-offline integration, ecosystem for retention, social media engagement, omni-channel strategies	Adapting to e-commerce needs, integrating online and offline experiences, and focusing on a robust business ecosystem.
Changing Consumer Behavior	Shift to online shopping, e-commerce dependency, safety in transactions, health consciousness, digitalization	Adapting to the online shopping trend, emphasizing health and safety, and responding to digital behavior changes.
Technology and Innovation	AI and data analytics, CRM strategies, efficiency through technology, AI in marketing, demand prediction	Leveraging technology, particularly AI and data analytics, for customer understanding and business innovation.
Market and Competition Dynamics	E-commerce market changes, service quality, agile marketing, customer demands, omni-channel approach	Adapting to rapidly evolving market and competition, with a focus on service quality and technology.
Consumer Trust and Security	Product quality, transaction safety, trust in advertising, digital experience, safe delivery	Building trust and ensuring security in product quality and transactions, critical in consumer decision-making.
Strategic Marketing and Branding	Responsive marketing, customer experience, personalization, emotional connection, demand prediction	Developing strategies focusing on customer needs, personalization, and predicting market trends.

Each theme in the modern digital business landscape plays a crucial role in shaping consumer purchase intentions. For instance, "Consumer Data Management and Analysis" enables personalized marketing and adaptable strategies by understanding consumer data, directly

influencing consumer buying decisions (Earley, 2017; Khorrami et al., 2023). Similarly, "Changing Consumer Behavior" highlights the need for businesses to align with shifting consumer preferences towards online shopping and health-conscious choices (X. Wang et al., 2022), thereby meeting new consumer expectations and positively impacting purchase intentions (Mehta et al., 2022). The integration of "Technology and Innovation" enhances customer experiences and introduces innovative solutions (Ylilehto et al., 2021), attracting consumers and influencing their purchasing decisions (Klaus et al., 2023). In the realm of "Market and Competition Dynamics," maintaining a competitive edge and responding adeptly to market changes, such as those brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic, are crucial for influencing consumer choices. The importance of "Consumer Trust and Security" cannot be overstated, as building trust through transaction security and data protection is essential for consumers' willingness to purchase, especially online (Aggarwal & Rahul, 2018). Lastly, "Strategic Marketing and Branding" shapes consumer perceptions and anticipates market trends (Bezerra et al., 2018), positioning products and services in a way that resonates with consumer desires (Blankson, 2016), thereby increasing the likelihood of purchases (Muhamad Radzi et al., 2021). Altogether, these themes collectively contribute to determining how and why consumers decide to make purchases, underlining the multifaceted approach needed for businesses to effectively influence consumer purchase intentions in the digital era.

In this marketing model, the pathway from personalized strategies to purchase intention is delineated through a series of interconnected steps (see Figure 1). Initially, Personalized Marketing, Adaptable Strategies, and Aligning with Consumer Trends work in unison to meet new customer expectations (Khorrami et al., 2023). The meeting of expectations, combined with an Enhanced Customer Experience, lays the foundation for Building Trust among consumers (M. Y. Wang et al., 2019). Simultaneously, the development of Innovative Solutions and anticipation of Market Trends give a Competitive Edge in the market (Day, 2023). This Competitive Edge, when supported by Quality Assurance, shapes a positive Brand Perception (Andik & Rachma, 2022). Additionally, the ability to effectively Respond to Market Changes enhances this perception even further (Desai & Waller, 2015). Thus, a positive Brand Perception, reinforced by trust, culminates in the final goal: Purchase Intention (Singh et al., 2021).

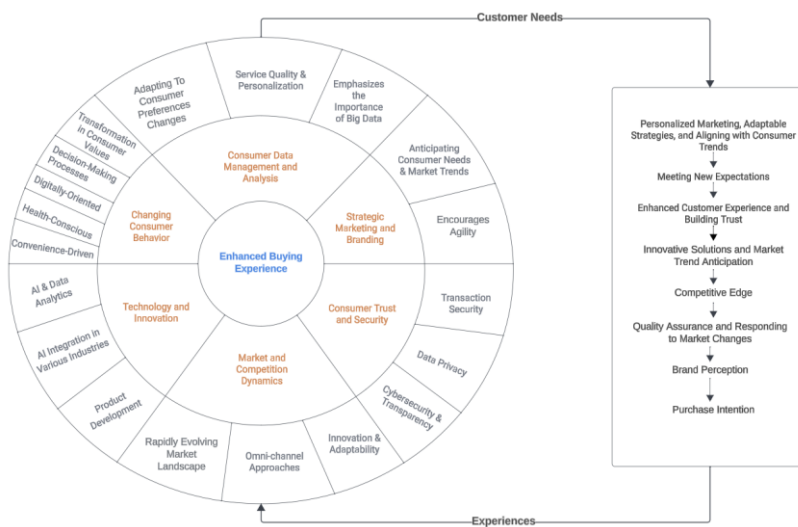


Figure 1: Customer Decision Making.

## **Conclusion**

This research aims to identify the current state of consumer shopping behavior pre, during, and post-pandemic, including behavioral segmentation and consumed commodities. Additionally, the research seeks to identify factors influencing changes in purchase behavior in the context of e-commerce and create a comprehensive research model that relates to purchase behavior, considering the changes observed pre, during, and post-pandemic. Using a qualitative approach through interviewing 16 participants from notable e-commerce companies, the findings of our coding saturation analysis reveal crucial insights into the current state of consumer behavior and business strategies in the digital age. We found six themes, namely, Consumer Data Management and Analysis, Changing Consumer Behavior, Technology and Innovation, Market and Competition Dynamics, Consumer Trust and Security, and Strategic Marketing and Branding. Key takeaways include the growing significance of big data in analyzing and adapting to consumer dynamics, particularly in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. The analysis highlights a shift towards prioritizing service quality and personalization over price, as well as the transformative impact of AI and data analytics on understanding and predicting consumer behavior. Additionally, there is a growing trend towards digital, health-conscious, and convenience-driven consumer preferences, which has been accelerated by the pandemic. The research also emphasizes the need for businesses to be agile and adaptable in their marketing strategies, particularly in an omni-channel environment. Furthermore, the study underscores the importance of consumer trust and security in e-commerce, as well as the need for strategic and adaptive marketing and branding in response to rapidly evolving consumer needs and preferences. These insights provide valuable guidance for businesses looking to navigate the complex digital landscape effectively.

### **5.1. Theoretical Implications**

This study makes a substantial contribution to the body of knowledge regarding the behavior of online shoppers, particularly in the context of the pandemic's revolutionary effects. It examines how pre-pandemic in-person purchasing habits changed, how the pandemic led to an increase in internet shopping, and how there may be a subtle shift back toward traditional shopping practices in the post-pandemic period. The study fills a void in the body of literature by methodically examining these transitions, which has mostly been ignored when it comes to a thorough examination of the variables influencing these dynamic changes. This encompasses the interaction between marketing and advertising strategies, government policies, natural disasters, and evolving consumer habits.

By providing a thorough analysis of how consumer behavior changes in times of global crisis and looking beyond the immediate consequences of the epidemic to take into account wider influencing variables, the research advances current theories. By presenting a unique research methodology, it questions and enhances well-established theoretical frameworks in the fields of consumer behavior and e-commerce. This model offers a comprehensive framework for comprehending and projecting future e-commerce trends, capturing the core of changing customer behaviors driven by a myriad of factors.

### **5.2. Implications for Practitioners**

This research offers a nuanced understanding of contemporary consumer shopping behaviors and the variables that drive shifts in e-commerce purchasing patterns. The study offers practitioners in the e-commerce business useful insights by creating a thorough research model that incorporates these components. The findings have led to the development of the following

useful applications and tactics that help improve decision-making procedures, maximize customer interactions, and eventually promote customer engagement, satisfaction, and loyalty.

The research findings might be utilized by practitioners to enhance their strategic methods, especially in comprehending the intricate preferences and behaviors of their clientele. The insights can guide the creation of more specialized product offerings, customer service improvements, and marketing efforts that are in line with the detected trends and preferences of the target audience. Moreover, the consumer behavior insights gleaned from the study can help e-commerce companies tailor their interaction techniques. Through customization of communication, marketing messaging, and online experiences based on the preferences identified by the study, businesses can improve the efficacy of their consumer interactions. Practitioners can create tactics that increase customer engagement by having a better understanding of the factors influencing consumer behavior and buying decisions in e-commerce contexts. This entails developing engagement campaigns, loyalty programs, and tailored purchasing experiences that align with the values and expectations of the target audience. The study emphasizes how crucial it is to implement customer-centric tactics. To keep their understanding of client demands and preferences up to date and their strategies in line with expectations from customers, businesses should incorporate feedback loops from customers, carry out frequent market research, and utilize data analytics. E-commerce companies can adjust their customer service procedures, user experience design, and marketing tactics in light of the study's findings in order to better serve their clientele. To improve the entire customer experience, this could involve personalizing user journeys, improving customer service channels, and optimizing website interfaces.

## **5. Limitations and Future Research Directions**

It is important to recognize that this study is limited to Indonesia geographically and that it focuses on one of the top e-commerce sites in the country. The examination of purchase patterns is limited to the consumers of this particular platform, which may not be representative of the larger Indonesian or global e-commerce user base. The study's scope and ability to capture the wide range of consumer behaviors across many platforms and geographies are limited by this focus.

Given the study's geographical and platform-specific constraints, there is a significant opportunity for future research to expand the horizon and diversify contexts, thereby enhancing the generalizability and relevance of the findings. Future studies could carry out comparative analysis. Through cross-national comparisons of e-commerce consumer behavior, scholars can identify the ways in which cultural disparities impact online purchasing patterns. This would provide insight into the distinctive consumer behaviors influenced by social, cultural, and economic variables. Moreover, future research can extend the reach of the e-commerce platform. Including more e-commerce platforms in the study, both domestically in Indonesia and abroad, may provide a deeper, more complex knowledge of customer behavior. Examining several platforms will yield significant insights for e-commerce enterprises functioning in an international setting by highlighting both platform-specific and universal customer trends.

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Theme	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	P8	P9	P10	P11	P12	P13	P14	P15	P16	P17	Conclusion	
Consumer Management and Analysis	Importance of service quality and purchasing data	Importance of customer discoun	Focus on customer understanding	Adapting strategies	Role of technology in adapting to trends	Social media affect decision making	Use of analytics in consumer behavior	Shift from offline to online behavior	Increase in e-commerce due to pandemic	Enhance digital presence	Transition to online event contexts	Shift in consumer online habits	Impact of COVID-19 on online behavior	Predicting trends with digital data	Optimizing big data use for deeper consumer understanding.	Integrating consumer behavior analysis into product strategy.	Advanced techniques in market prediction through shift in price-focused strategies to service quality and personalization.		There is a strong emphasis on the use of consumer data for understanding and predicting trends, with a shift from price-focused strategies to service quality and personalization.
Business Ecosystem and Integration	Need for e-commerce adaptability	Integration of online and offline worlds	Complex ecosystem for retention	Adapting to consumer changes	Brand strategies in digital media	Role of social media in consumer engagement	Attributes in advertising	Trust in e-commerce platforms	Digital storefronts' significance	Importance of omnichannel approach	Hybrid event formats	Digital and social media focus	SEO and AI impact	Emphasis on omnichannel strategies	Developing synergies among business units	Cross-industry collaboration for product and service innovation.	Leveraging technology for smoother customer experience	The integration of online and offline experiences is crucial for creating a robust business ecosystem to cater to evolving consumer needs.	

Theme	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	P8	P9	P10	P11	P12	P13	P14	P15	P16	P17	Conclusion	
Changing Consumer Behavior	Shift towards online shopping	Dependency on e-commerce for everyday items	Customer-centric approach	Long-term changes in consumer needs	Changes in product interests	Role of social media in shopping	Shifts in types of goods bought	Behavioral changes during COVID-19	Safety concerns as a new norm	Safety concerns accelerating e-commerce adoption	Virtual and hybrid events	Changes in online shopping habits	Post-COVID offline trend	Increased health and digitalization	Adapting marketing strategies to shifting consumer trends.	Analyzing the impact of digitalization on consumer choices.	Predicting future shifts in consumer needs.		A clear shift towards online shopping and digital solutions, with changing priorities such as health and convenience.
Technology and Innovation	Use of AI analytics	Role of technology in CRM strategies	Emphasis on technology for efficiency	New technologies in media	Technology in brand strategies	Technology in social media interaction	Machine learning and AI in marketing	Emergence of AI and customer preferences	AI in customer interaction	Technology in event organization	AI and large language models	AI in SEO	Digitalization and demand prediction	Implementing AI to enhance customer experience.	Continuous innovation as a key to business growth.	Market penetration strategies with cutting-edge technology.		Market analytics is central to understanding consumer behavior and innovating in response.	
Market and Competition Dynamics	E-commerce market changes	Evolution of service quality in e-commerce	Focus on effective operations	Digital marketing adaptation	Brand identity in the market	Evolution of social commerce	Market strategies post-pandemic	Omnichannel demand quality	Agile marketing strategies	Market adaptation in events	Market trends and customer loyalty	Market trends and customer loyalty	Omni-channel approaches	Strategic competition in global markets.	Market shifts for competitive advantages.	Understanding dynamic market conditions.	Adapting to rapid changes in technology.	The market is rapidly evolving with a focus on service quality and technology. Companies are employing omnichannel strategies to stay competitive.	
Consumer Trust and Security	Importance of product quality and payment security	Consumer trust in transactions and safety	Emphasis on operational transparency	Trust in advertising and media	Brand image and consumer trust	Trust in social media platforms	Advertising and consumer decision	Authenticity in e-commerce	Trust in digital experiences	Security in online transactions	Trust in online shopping	Trust in digital information	Focus on safe delivery and digitalization	Enhancing transparency to build consumer trust.	Prioritizing data security as a top concern.	Cybersecurity initiatives for consumer protection.		Trust and security, both in product quality and transactions, are key factors in consumer decisions.	

Theme	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	P8	P9	P10	P11	P12	P13	P14	P15	P16	P17	Conclusion
Strategic Marketing and Branding	Need for responsive and marketing strategies	Emphasis on customer experience	Focus on custom needs and retention	Adapting to market changes	Emotional connection with consumers	Influence of social media branding	Adapting market strategies for changes	Omni-channel marketing strategy	Customer-centric marketing	Personalized marketing	Event management and marketing	Product management and marketing	SEO and responsive behavior	Importance of predicting demand trends	Developing brands that resonate with consumers	Creative content for effective branding	Trend analysis for understanding and catering to consumer needs	Marketing strategies are increasingly focused on understanding and catering to consumer needs, with an emphasis on predicting future trends.