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**THE INFLUENCING FACTORS OF SOCIAL COMMERCE ON SHOPPING
BEHAVIOR AMONG NON-EARNING INDIVIDUALS IN THE DIGITAL AGE**

By



Thesis Submitted to

Othman Yeop Abdullah Graduate School of Business,

Universiti Utara Malaysia,

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for the Master of Science (Management)



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ABSTRACT

The main objective of this study is to examine the factors that influence shopping behaviour among non-earning individuals in the context of social commerce in Malaysia. This research investigates five key predictors: price sensitivity, social interaction, visual appeal, hedonic motivation, and trust. Past literature has shown varying results on the impact of these factors on online shopping behaviour, particularly among non-earning individuals, leading to the need for further investigation. The target population for this study comprised students from Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM), Sintok, Kedah, due to their active use of social media and familiarity with online commerce. Structured questionnaires were distributed using a simple random sampling technique, and a total of 300 valid responses were collected. The data were analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), through descriptive statistics, reliability testing, and multiple regression analysis to examine the relationships between the independent variables and shopping behaviour. The results show that price sensitivity, social interaction, visual appeal, hedonic motivation, and trust all have a significant relationship with the shopping behaviour of non-earning individuals on social commerce platforms. Among these, price sensitivity emerged as the most influential factor, followed by trust and hedonic motivation, while visual appeal and social interaction also demonstrated notable effects. The findings offer valuable insights for marketers, social media platforms, and e-commerce businesses aiming to target non-earning consumers more effectively. The study highlights the importance of affordability, trust-building, emotional appeal, and social engagement in influencing the purchase decisions of this segment. Finally, managerial implications, limitations of the study, and recommendations for future research are discussed.

Keywords: Social Shopping Behavior; Trust; Hedonic Motivation; Visual Appeal; Price; Social Interaction

ABSTRAK

Objektif utama kajian ini adalah untuk mengkaji faktor-faktor yang mempengaruhi tingkah laku pembelian dalam kalangan individu yang tidak berpendapatan dalam konteks perdagangan sosial di Malaysia. Kajian ini meneliti lima peramal utama iaitu kepekaan harga, interaksi sosial, daya tarikan visual, motivasi hedonik, dan kepercayaan. Kajian lepas telah menunjukkan keputusan yang berbeza-beza terhadap kesan faktor-faktor ini terhadap tingkah laku pembelian dalam talian, khususnya dalam kalangan individu tidak berpendapatan, yang menimbulkan keperluan untuk siasatan lanjut. Populasi sasaran bagi kajian ini terdiri daripada pelajar Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM), Sintok, Kedah memandangkan mereka merupakan pengguna aktif media sosial dan biasa dengan platform perdagangan dalam talian. Soal selidik berstruktur telah diedarkan menggunakan kaedah persampelan rawak mudah, dan sebanyak 300 respons sah telah dikumpulkan. Data yang diperoleh dianalisis menggunakan Perisian Statistik untuk Sains Sosial (SPSS) melalui statistik deskriptif, ujian kebolehpercayaan, dan analisis regresi berganda untuk mengkaji hubungan antara pembolehubah bebas dan tingkah laku pembelian. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahawa kepekaan harga, interaksi sosial, daya tarikan visual, motivasi hedonik, dan kepercayaan mempunyai hubungan yang signifikan terhadap tingkah laku pembelian individu tidak berpendapatan di platform perdagangan sosial. Kepekaan harga dikenal pasti sebagai faktor paling dominan, diikuti oleh kepercayaan dan motivasi hedonik, manakala daya tarikan visual dan interaksi sosial turut memberi kesan yang ketara. Penemuan kajian ini memberikan pandangan yang berguna kepada pemasar, platform media sosial, dan perniagaan e-dagang dalam usaha untuk menarik minat pengguna tidak berpendapatan dengan lebih berkesan. Kajian ini menekankan kepentingan aspek kemampuan, pembinaan kepercayaan, penglibatan emosi, dan pengaruh sosial dalam mempengaruhi keputusan pembelian. Akhir sekali, implikasi pengurusan, keterbatasan kajian, dan cadangan untuk kajian masa hadapan turut dibincangkan.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

An increase in social media popularity combined with e-commerce has evolved the way consumers shop (Miller & Brown, 2022). Social commerce platforms widen the path for consumers to discover products with recommendations and make purchases by interacting with sellers through live chats, comment sections, and community groups (Chen et al., 2021). For instance, consumers can seek feedback from friends or other shoppers during a live sale event or join in group conversations prior to making a purchase, fostering a feeling of community and a collective shopping experience. This change in consumer habits has piqued the interest of marketers and researchers, leading to more in-depth studies of the elements that affect shopping behaviors in social commerce settings.

People who don't earn a regular income are also an important group of consumers, with their own unique needs and behaviors (Yang & Chang, 2023). Due to their lack of financial resources, price sensitivity or value of money largely guides their behaviour compared to the behaviour of other groups of customers (Li & Wang, 2021). The opportunity of being able to gain access to affordable products, offers, discounts, etc. can significantly impact the purchasing behavior of non-earning individuals and take advantage of that by using social commerce platforms (Han & Kim, 2022).

In addition, non-earners are frequent social media users, who obtain information, entertainment, and social activities through them (Hoffman & Novak, 2020). Some social media platforms

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APPENDIX A



COLLEGE OF BUSINESS (COB)

UNIVERSITI UTARA MALAYSIA

06010 SINTOK, KEDAH

QUESTIONNAIRE

THE INFLUENCING FACTORS OF SOCIAL COMMERCE ON SHOPPING BEHAVIOR AMONG NON-EARNING INDIVIDUALS IN THE DIGITAL AGE

Universiti Utara Malaysia

To the corresponding shoppers,

I am a final-year Master of Science Management research student at the School of Business Management University Utara Malaysia Sintok Kedah. The objective of this survey is to gather information among students to understand the influencing factors of social commerce on shopping in the digital age. Your completion of this survey will go a long way toward helping me succeed with my research project. As a result, I truly appreciate your willingness to participate in the survey. There is no right or incorrect response, and we will consider your response with confidence. Thank you for the kind response.

Researcher:

Barathi Nair Balan

MSc. Management

830057

SECTION A: PERSONAL INFORMATION

Please fill in and mark (/) in the space provided below.

1. Gender:

- I. Male
- II. Female

2. Age:

- I. 18-25
- II. 26-35
- III. 36-45

3. Ethnicity:

- I. Malay
- II. Chinese
- III. Indian
- IV. Others

4. State:

- I. Perlis
- II. Kedah
- III. Pulau Pinang
- IV. Kuala Lumpur
- V. Perak
- VI. Selangor
- VII. Kelantan



- VIII. Pahang
- IX. Terengganu
- X. Negeri Sembilan
- XI. Melaka
- XII. Johor
- XIII. Sarawak
- XIV. Sabah

5. I have done online shopping:

- I. Yes
- II. No

6. Frequency of buying online:

- I. Once a week
- II. Once a month
- III. Every 3 months
- IV. Every 6 months
- V. Never

7. S-commerce site that is used.

- I. Zalora
- II. Instagram
- III. Facebook
- IV. TikTok
- V. Shein
- VI. Others

SECTION B: The following statement are regarding your perception and assumption about online shopping.

Instructions: Please use this scale provided below to answer the following question by the most appropriate answer.

Please mark (/) in the space provided

1. Strongly disagree
2. Disagree
3. Neutral
4. Agree
5. Strongly Agree

Bil	Question	1	2	3	4	5
1	I bought items I had not planned to purchase on this website/after using this website.					
2	During exploring this website, I felt a sudden urge to buy something and I bought it.					
3	When/after using the website, my purchase was spontaneous.					
4	When/after using the website, my purchase was unplanned.					
5	Product on internet is cheaper than the physical store.					
6	Product on internet is affordable.					
7	Constantly have a promotion in online store.					
8	I use online forums and online communities for acquiring information about a product.					
9	I usually use people rating and reviews about products on the internet.					
10	I usually use people's recommendations to buy a product on the internet.					

11	I rely on online reviewers' credibility.				
12	Online shopping websites are visually pleasing.				
13	Online shopping websites display visually pleasing designs.				
14	The layouts of online shopping websites are attractive.				
15	Online websites create feelings of originality.				
16	While web browsing, I am able to forget my problems.				
17	During web browsing, I am very excited, like playing.				
18	While web browsing, I feel relaxed.				
19	I enjoy web browsing enough to forget a time out.				
20	I look around at items on the internet just for fun.				
21	I trust the social network sites.				
22	I feel social network sites are secured.				
23	I feel that my personal and transaction information will be protected.				
24	I think social network site is reliable.				

THANK YOU